

Honors Capstone for Completion of University Honors in the School of International Service

Advised by Professor Kwaku Nuamah

REDEFINING A REGION: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF  
POPULAR UPRISINGS ON REGIMES IN TUNISIA AND ALGERIA

By

Lauren Barr

BA International Studies, School of International Service

BA Economics, College of Arts and Sciences

Minor in Arabic, College of Arts and Sciences

Spring 2011

American University

Washington D.C. 20016

REDEFINING A REGION: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF  
POPULAR UPRISINGS ON REGIMES IN TUNISIA AND ALGERIA

By

Lauren Barr

ABSTRACT

In the wake of the Cold War, a third wave of democratization was felt throughout the world – except in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). As a result, the last two decades of scholarship on the region has focused on explaining its enduring, robust authoritarianism, often consigning it to “Arab exceptionalism.” In December 2010, however, mass popular uprisings in many MENA countries created the first substantial threat to these regimes and to the theories that predicted democratization was unlikely. In light of these developments, this research proposes a refined conceptual framework for understanding the dynamics of the political ecosystem.

Applied in a comparative case study analysis of Tunisia and Algeria, the framework illuminates that the former was able to oust its regime while the latter’s regime remained strong due to a combination of prerequisite socioeconomic factors, elite actions, and institutions that facilitated or inhibited their impact.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have gotten inspiration and support for this project from many people, without whom it would not have been possible. First, I am extremely grateful for the guidance of Dr. Kwaku Nuamah and for the extraordinary people who allowed me to interview them formally and informally. Every time I thought I knew the answer, their provocative questions helped me refine it that much more. I would also like to thank the staff and faculty at the American University Honors Department for providing resources and encouragement and my fellow peers for going through the process with me. Thank you to my parents and my wonderful brothers, Ethan and Greg, for being unconditionally loving and supportive and, finally, to Amine who has been at my side every step of the way.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	6
Statement of the Problem	
Purpose of the Study	
Significance and Rationale	
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
In the Wake of the Third Wave	
The Sticking Power of Authoritarianism	
Prerequisite Conditions	
The Importance of Human Agency	
Institutions: The Bridge	
The Search for an Integrative Framework	
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	28
Research Questions	
Data Collection: Interviews and Secondary Sources	
Analytical Framework	
4. TUNISIA .....	35
Prerequisite Conditions	
The “Jasmine Revolution”	
Explaining the Outcome: Successful Political Change	

5. ALGERIA.....	51
History and Background	
Prerequisites	
Algerian Participation in the “Arab Spring”	
Explaining the Outcome: Holding onto the Status Quo	
6. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS.....	67
Prerequisites	
Elites	
Institutions	
7. CONCLUSION .....	73
WORKS CITED.....	74

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has always been a source of scholarly intrigue. With artifacts of humanity's first civilizations in Mesopotamia, the mythologies found in *Arabian Nights* and datasets on current economic trends, there is no shortage of information available for public and academic consumption. While many aspects of the region's contemporary politics and society have been vigorously discussed and debated, however, the understanding of the region today is confounded by numerous and challenging questions. The plethora of think tanks, university programs, and regional experts dedicated to tackling aspects of culture, identity, politics, and history all attest to the complexities and dynamism of the region.

Of particular interest in the post-colonial world is the system of governance prevalent in the countries of the MENA region. Research of the last two decades, especially, has been focused on the stability and endurance of the centralized governments that have reigned in most countries since independence. While much of the world democratized, the MENA regimes have more or less effectively maintained the old status quo and their authoritarian powers. According to most scholars, the prospects for liberal democracy in the near future seemed close to nil.

Given the state of the discourse on MENA authoritarianism, it came as a tremendous shock to everyone when, in December 2010 after a fruit and vegetable vendor in a Tunisian town

self-immolated, the region erupted into a wave of massive public uprisings calling for democracy and reform. Unrest occurred in every country and the resulting impact was astounding; Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak stepped down and deferred power to a transitional military council, in Libya a civil war ensued, prompting international intervention, Syrian security forces are engaging in violent clashes with protesters, and much more. Two cases are especially instructive due to the stark differences in their experiences: in Tunisia President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali was successfully overthrown, while in neighboring Algeria disparate protest movements gradually fizzled out leaving President Abdelaziz Bouteflika securely in power.

After decades of relative stability, the force and rapidity with which mass movements sprung up to challenge the long-standing status quo took the world by surprise. How could such an upheaval occur without warning? Now, people are anxious to unpack the factors that led to such dramatic action and explain what occurred and how. Moreover, with the whole region rising up at once, there is a unique chance to study not only what they have in common, but how their differences are leading their countries down different paths. That the world failed to anticipate or fully explain these events demonstrates that there is much still to learn about the dynamics of throughout the region.

### Purpose of the Study

The events in Middle East and North Africa – unpredicted and unprecedented – provide a remarkable opportunity to delve deeply into the complexities of the region today. It is a chance to reevaluate assumptions and explore the provocative questions the recent upheaval has brought to the forefront: What caused this phenomenon of massive uprisings to occur and how can it be understood in an historical context? What was the role of factors like social media, repressive

armies, and individual agency? In addition to examining the dynamics within each country, moreover, this is an opportunity to ask also: what so differs from one neighbor to the next that has allowed regime change to occur in some but fail in others?

To begin the conversation, this paper engages in a qualitative, comparative case study analysis of Tunisia and Algeria and aims to provide a possible explanation for the success or failure of political change in those two states. In order to establish a robust analytical framework, the contemporary literature on the MENA region is reviewed and the hypotheses regarding the authoritarian political landscape are divided into three prevalent themes: prerequisites, human agency, and institutions. From this, an integrative framework is proposed which bridges the compelling factors to explain political change. Applying the model to Tunisia and Algeria, the outcomes of recent events are then analyzed and compared and conclusions are then drawn regarding the overall impact of the popular uprisings. Through their juxtaposition, it is hoped that factors which contributed to the divergent outcomes in those countries can become clear.

### Significance and Rationale

Most previous studies on the Middle East and North Africa have focused on the resilience of authoritarianism, assuming that graying leaders like Ben Ali and Bouteflika would soon give way to their sons and military generals in a continuation of centralized, decidedly undemocratic rule. Few considered the possibility that spontaneous mass uprisings could shift the long-standing status quo – and yet it happened. A thorough and comprehensive examination of the causes and the consequences of this “Arab Spring” is imperative and carries great importance for the study of the region moving forward. Since the events are so recent, moreover, there is little



scholarly work written at the moment; thus, this effort is a timely and essential addition to the current academic and political discourse. This does not presume to be a definitive explanation, but rather a start to an important conversation that others may add to and refine.

Choosing Tunisia and Algeria strategically contrasts two places notable for both their similarities and for their striking differences. For example, both share a common language and religion, a history of French colonization, and repressive authoritarian regimes. That said, Algeria has three times the population of Tunisia, bears the scars of two bloody wars and runs its economy on hydrocarbon exports. Tunisia, on the other hand, has a more diversified economy and a more peaceful past. Together, they represent the impressive diversity of a region that is united by a common Arab and Muslim heritage, but is also unique in several vital respects.

The goal is to contribute new knowledge and insights to the debate on the characteristics of the region and the dynamics within its component countries. In addition, the framework developed here can easily be applied to other countries in MENA – and throughout the world. Perhaps through future efforts, the general hypotheses explored here can be extended to a more diverse set of cases and more robust and universal conclusions can be extracted.

For the purposes of this study, several propositions were evaluated. The primary hypothesis was that the framework would successfully hold up in the process of scrutinizing two very different cases. More specifically, the framework proposed that the existence of certain prerequisite conditions in combination with the interplay between elites and their institutions would adequately explain the expression of political change in both countries, and also that differences in those structures could elucidate the differences between them. Several conclusions come out of this analysis. First, in order for mass mobilization to occur, there must be a broad sense of economic and political deprivation attributed to the regime's management.

Also, historical precedents must suggest that the regime in its current form is less desirable than the anticipated alternatives if change through revolution is achieved. If that threshold of popular buy-in is met, change is most likely when the ruling elites are unable to effectively leverage power through economic and coercive institutions, either because they lack the resources, act too late, or experience internal defection. On the flip side of the equation, oppositional elites are more powerful when they agree to a unified set of demands.

This is a delicate equation and the tipping point cannot be pinpointed in abstract theory. Tunisia and Algeria, however, illustrate two outcomes: the first where oppositional elites prevailed and the latter where ruling elites have thus far maintained control. These outcomes were due to three substantial differences in inputs to the equation: (1) While economic and political grievances are pervasive in both, their failed attempt at democratization in 1988 makes Algerians more cautious to instigate change through uprisings, (2) Tunisian opposition groups were easily unified under the common demand for economic and political rights due to their strong networks of communication and informed middle class. Algerian opposition groups, despite their history of free press and frequent demonstrations, remained disunified because of geographic separation and disagreement on a national agenda of political demands, (3) the Tunisian ruling elites led by Ben Ali were not prepared to utilize their coercive and economic capabilities and thus their response to opposition was too little too late, however Algerian leadership proactively constrained the growth of demonstrations through an overwhelming show of military strength, and finally (4) the defection of military elites effectively withdrew Ben Ali's strongest asset and left him without an option, but Algerian decision-making remained unified under the Sécurité Militaire who effectively commanded economic, political, and coercive institutions.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The last two decades of scholarship on the Middle East and North Africa are impressive for their breadth and diversity; however, the region occupies a rather unique space within the social sciences. While the region's political trajectory immediately after colonial independence is similar to the majority of developing nations throughout the world, when the third wave of democratization in the 1980s and 1990s brought about significant political change in every region but MENA, the study of MENA countries shifted, emphasizing a sense of "Arab exceptionalism" (Stepan and Robertson 2004). Until recently, MENA has been put in a different category – excluded or ignored in much of the literature on democratization and perceived as a deviant to established theories of political change. Detailed accounts of why authoritarian regimes have persisted for so long in the region far outweigh those focusing on the possibility of future transition. With rumblings of change now felt throughout the region, it is time to overcome the resistance to formal modeling and combine research on the nature of the regimes with theories of political change, eventually formulating a new integrative framework for viewing the dynamics shaping the region.

#### In the Wake of the Third Wave

Domestic unrest is common in many countries, especially those in the developing world. Manifestations of instability are present in a variety of forms, including riots, coups, civil wars,

collective violence, etc. The rapid spreading of democratization after the Cold War, however, rose above all expectations of popular movements. As the Soviet Union declined, public demonstrations took the stage in countries as divergent as the Philippines, Czechoslovakia, Bangladesh, and Serbia (D'Anieri 2006). Freedom House recorded a 50% increase in democracies from 1990 to 1994, from 76 to 114, and the trend continued to rise. The effects were felt in Eastern Europe, Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia – but not in the Middle East or North Africa (Brownlee 2010).

This explosion of democracy throughout the world became known as the “third wave of democratization” – a term coined by Samuel Huntington in his book, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Huntington 1991). The massive uprisings of the 1980s and 1990s provided a new opportunity for analysis of revolutions and created a new concept: democratic revolutions. The traditional understanding of revolutions, developed in the works of scholars like Theda Skocpol and Vladimir Lenin, described unique social processes of transformational change. All aspects of society – from values to political institutions – are affected. (Skocpol 1979; Huntington 2006; Lenin 1917). The experiences of countries from Eastern Europe to Latin America gave rise to a modern version of this phenomenon: democratic revolution, characterized as “spontaneous popular uprisings – peaceful, urban-based, and cross-class in composition – which topple unyielding dictators and begin a transition process which leads to the consolidation of democracy,” (Thompson 2004, 1). While different from the traditional class-based, rural rebellions, democratic revolutions are clear manifestations of popular revolution and they have reshaped the emphasis of literature over that last few decades (D'Anieri 2006). For twenty years after the third wave, the MENA region was little affected, but the recent events have proven the region is not immune to the factors that resulted in tumultuous

changes throughout the world during the third wave. The literature on MENA, however, does not yet reflect that reality.

### The Sticking Power of Authoritarianism

Following the third wave, scholars largely pursued two paths: the study of transitions away from authoritarianism and those who study how countries that survived the wave are able to maintain their authoritarian systems. Of course, the two foci naturally inform each other: the divergent paths of a country that experiences regime change and a country that remains stagnant may be explained by the presence or lack of a common set of factors. Indeed, as Brownlee astutely points out, it is nigh impossible to find a study of nondemocratic regimes that does not define them as the lack of functional democratic elements – such as elections and separation of powers – but instead creates a positive frame. (Brownlee 2002)

Still, the works on the Middle East and North Africa have been highly focused on the latter branch with few scholars suggesting imminent political change. While the rest of the world was busy democratizing, the MENA literature maintained robust authoritarian regimes that are, in many ways, remarkably similar to one another, especially in terms of their durability and the efficiency of their repressive mechanisms (Khalidi 2004). While some scholars have attempted to bring them into the study of political change, few transitions have taken place in MENA countries and evidence actually suggests that some are moving farther from democracy, not closer. Masks of liberalization cannot cover up the increasingly repressive systems that still bear the trappings of authoritarianism. (Brownlee 2002; Joffe-Walt 2010)

Given the lack of change, attempts were made instead to place the MENA experience in its own theoretical universe. Recently, scholars have increased efforts to combine field work research with more universal theoretical tools. While it is still rare to find new theories

generated from the bottom up, these encouraging trends have already been helpful in filling in many gaps. The sense that MENA is somehow different still persists, but the dynamics that define MENA are becoming far less opaque (Haklai 2009). In addition, while there are numerous studies which add to the understanding of the region in areas such as gender and political reform (Brand 1998) and political economy (Herb 2005), the vast majority of scholarly debate has consistently been dominated by talk of authoritarianism and Islamic movements.

The variety of approaches that have emerged to explain the persistence of authoritarianism are numerous, but they tend to emphasize common themes such as economic inequality, natural resources, elite cohesion, and opportunity structures (Brownlee 2010). Taking them all into consideration, the literature has been sorted into three broad categories of explanations that prioritize prerequisite arguments, human agency, or institutional factors. In the end, it is posited that they are not necessarily in competition, but rather elements of each can be consolidated into an integrative framework that maximizes explanatory power.

### Prerequisite Conditions

Prerequisite theories use macro-structural variables to explain two things: (1) why authoritarianism is able to persist, or barriers to change, and (2) what it would take for the masses to desire political change enough to rebel against it. Many of the concepts are derived from older literature on revolution (Gurr 1970; Dollard 1980; Pulparampil 1976; Rustow 1968), but the prerequisites theories have evolved as well and include more contemporary research as well (Tessler 2002; Fattah 2006). Included in the barriers to change are economic conditions, international support, culture, and history. The theories on what makes change desirable or necessary focus on the psychological and socioeconomic condition. All together, these factors establish the environment in which change is more or less likely.

The most frequently cited source of support for authoritarian regimes is the centralized control over the economy. In Richard and Waterbury's overview of Arab political economy, they show that in economies where much of the income is derived from external rents like hydrocarbons, regimes get wealthy without needing to be accountable to the people or developing complex, diversified economies that would lead to more pluralism. While strong overall fiscal health is helpful, rentier incomes allow regimes to maintain coercive apparatuses regardless of the level of societal welfare (i.e. employment opportunities, infrastructure, public services, etc). (Richards and Waterbury 2008) This logic has some merit; however, as there are also numerous examples of similarly-structured statist economies that nonetheless have moved toward democracy.

There is also compelling evidence to suggest that economic liberalization, rather than inspiring political openings as the IMF and World Bank purport, more often strengthens government economic control. With state officials leading the process of economic restructuring, the relationship between the state and society did not much change with economic reform. In fact, King shows how reforms in MENA likely increased the private sector's dependence on the state due to the patronage system and the need for political stability to attract and maintain foreign investors (King 2009) . In conclusion, the presence of rents and the regime-led character of economic reforms have played a large role in enabling authoritarian regimes to resist political change (Dillman 2002).

### International Support

One particularly relevant factor in supporting authoritarianism in the MENA countries, more so than countries elsewhere it would seem, is the constant backing of powerful international supporters. In the past, the regimes aptly played against Cold War rivalries, but it has since developed into dependencies on MENA oil and natural gas and alliances against international terrorism. No doubt, the MENA rulers have found strong and steady friends in Europe and the US and this has given them, not only international legitimacy, but also the implicit go-ahead to maintain repressive state systems. (Khalidi 2004; Posusney and Angrist 2005)

### Domestic Legitimacy

Legitimacy is important, not only on the international stage, but also to some extent domestically as well. While some, like Michael Hudson claim the status quo of Arab politics will necessarily fall if legitimacy is not achieved (Hudson 1992), others argue that true legitimacy may not be required. Wedeen takes a unique approach by looking at how disciplinary-symbolic power has been utilized, often in lieu of legitimacy or coercion, to gain mass compliance. Excessive praise for the president, for instance, reinforces the mythology of the regime and – while it creates a gap between compliance and belief – it prevents the public development of a shared perception of opposition. Thus, even in the absence of legitimacy, there is the façade of legitimacy and a significant psychological barrier to dissent. This helps greatly to explain the lack of formal, public resistance shows that the longevity of a regime is related to both its ability to defeat opposition – but also its ability to prevent dissent from arising in the first place (Wedeen 1999).



Related to that is the historical context. The regime may not be fully legitimate in the eyes of the masses, however what actually matters is not how well the regime is doing, but how bad the alternatives are. Initially, the heavy-handed states were necessary and desirable replacements to colonial rule. The subsequent transitions in MENA have since been mostly either monarchical succession or coups, like Ben Ali's, to replace a failing leader that few lamented leaving. In other cases, notably Algeria in the aftermath of the civil war, the state has been the station against chaos and violence. In MENA, some argue, traditional legitimacy may not exist – but neither do the alternatives. (O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead 1986)

### Culture

When cultural is brought into the debate on democratization in MENA, it is almost always emphasized as an inhibiting factor. Within the discourse of “Arab exceptionalism,” factors often include supposedly unique Arab characteristics such as the influence of Islam, “oriental despotism,” patrimonialism, patriarchalism, “small group politics” and mass passivity (Sharabi 1988; Huntington 1984). Huntington noted also that the region has no prior history of democratic rule, unlike many other regions, and so this perhaps indicates a lack of widespread democratic values (Huntington 2006). Much of these discussions, however, have been dismissed as rooted in historical antagonism between the East and West without a firm basis. In fact, many non-Arab countries have successfully democratized despite being patriarchal or reliant on patrimonial networks. (Hinnebusch 2006)

Efforts to seize on the idea of cultural particularism may be less salient these days; however, more current works have also tried to highlight the possibility of exceptional nature of Arab society through popular attitudes toward democracy. For instance, some scholars have

employed public opinion polling and survey analysis (Tessler 2002; Fattah 2006; Tessler and Gao 2005). Most commonly, conclusions from this approach result in negative stereotyping that implies ingrained differences between Arabs and Muslims, on one hand, and Westerners on the other (Haklai 2009). Taking Islam into consideration as a deterrent, moreover, has become increasingly difficult as other Muslim-majority nations outside of the region begin their own experiments with democracy (for instance Malaysia and Turkey). Moreover, other political culture studies have found there is no unified “Muslim” opinion on democracy and, in fact, there is no correlation between views on democracy and the level of a person’s religiosity. The idea that Arab culture is somehow averse to democracy still remains an argument in some circles (Fish 2002; Tessler 2002; Stepan and Robertson 2004). Thus, culture may be justifiably perceived, not as an explanatory variable per se, but as a potentially inhibiting factor if certain elements hostile to democracy (for example, a traditional interpretation of authority) are prominent (Hinnebusch 2006). Huntington puts it best when he describes culture as dynamic and dominant beliefs and attitudes as mutable over time. (Hinnebusch 2006; Huntington 1991).

### *Drivers of Political Change*

Turning now to the other side of the equation – at the forefront of early theories of why political change is able to occur were those that emphasized social conditions, in particular their psychological dynamics. One of the first models was created by John Dollard, called the Frustration-Aggression Model. Along with scholars like Almond and Davies, Dollard proposed that resentment, dissatisfaction, and unmet needs drive people to rebellion (Dollard 1980; Pulpampil 1976). Additional theorizing on grievances emerged with Hannah Arendt’s Poverty Thesis which suggested that poverty was the origin of that frustration (Arendt 1989). These can

explain some of the sentiments leading to mass discontent and mobilization, but they do not explain why uprisings do not occur wherever there is discontent. Moreover, they do not take into account other legitimate avenues for addressing grievances are available, like petitioning and political parties (Hafez 2003).

In an effort to refine these ideas, Ted Gurr explained in his prominent book, *Why Men Rebel*, that it's not just deprivations, but the mismatch between expectations and capabilities that leads to collective action (Gurr 1970). Mancur Olson also argued that when rapid growth occurs, prior attachments to social subgroups become less important and, with the changing social order falling by the wayside aggressive action is more likely (Pulparampil 1976; Olson 1982). Later, Huntington flushed out this thesis of relative deprivation with his gap hypothesis, arguing that the destabilizing tendencies of modernization lead to tensions between expectations and the socio-economic reality. (Huntington 1971, 2006)

As countries become wealthier and their economies more complex, these theories imply that authoritarian systems are no longer a sufficient means of governance. In fact, the strong positive relationship between the level of economic development and the existence of democratic politics is well-tested: most of the world's wealthy countries are also democratic – and the opposite is true for the poor ones. (Huntington 1971) The justification for this phenomenon, according to political scientist Dankwart A. Rustow, was that modernization increases the need for cooperation between all people in the society (Rustow 1968). The vital thresholds, however, were difficult to identify. Huntington revealed what he considered to be the “transition zone” of economic development in which democratization was likely; however, by 1988 Algeria had already reached it and Tunisia and other nations were fast approaching. More, thus, was needed to explain the lack of change. Partly explaining why this is insufficient goes back to one of the

barriers to change: economic rents. In a country that grows rich off of resources, the destabilizing effects of modernization will not be felt to the same extent because the complex private-sector economy does not develop with it (Herb 2005).

Summarizing the prerequisite arguments, the factors of state economic control, international support, domestic legitimacy and coercion, and culture all evidently have a negative impact on the development of democracy. Bellin insightfully concludes, however, that these barriers help account for the resistance to democratization, but they do not preclude the possibility of such a transition in the future. (Bellin 2004) If those barriers are to be overcome, however, there has to be a desire for it, and the public perceptions in favor of change are best created through a sense of relative socioeconomic inequities.

### The Importance of Human Agency

Both the barriers to change and the will to change them necessitate human action. Therefore, how people interact within the environment – and seek to alter it – has become a prominent aspect of MENA study. More specifically, analyses of the elites’ role has propelled itself to the forefront of analyses on the topic of both authoritarianism and political change. The term “elites” –sometimes qualified as the “politically relevant elites” – refers to those with the power to influence political discourse and decision-making on strategic issues. This can include political office holders, military personnel, and even opinion-makers. Others, like businessmen, media, religious and civil society leaders may only be considered elites if they make important contributions to the political process. Also, elites can be either incumbent or oppositional (Burton and Higley 2001; Higley and Moore 2001; Peeler 2001; Perthes 2004)

### *Ruling Elites*

In Perthes' recent study specifically on Arab elites, he identifies three concentric circles of ruling elite voices – the core and the secondary and tertiary levels. The character of elite contribution to political change is determined by the circulation of elites in the three circles and the relationship between new elites and socioeconomic and structural political changes (Perthes 2004). Both Bellin and Brownlee discuss how the desire of ruling elites' to stay in power often leads them to go to far lengths – including unabashed repression of the populace – and helps to explain the longevity of authoritarian regimes (Bellin 2005; Brownlee 2005).

Thus, structural changes often happen when there is a circulation of elites – for instance when tertiary elites become secondary or core – and especially when the top leaders of a nation are demoted. Huntington, for one, notes that transition depends on the weakening of core elite networks and the eventual ousting of the incumbent leaders (Huntington 1991). Other studies by Erdle and Werenfels on Tunisia and Algeria respectively also conclude that big transitions will not occur until there is change in relative influence amongst politically relevant elites, especially the fall of prime decision-makers and core elites' ability to control elite recruitment and elite circulation and defection (Erdle 2004; Werenfels 2004). One caution, however, is that different leadership does not always equal a change in regime type and there is plenty of evidence of co-optation and false competition giving the illusion of elite change when the same distribution of power remains. (Perthes 2004)

### *Opposition Elites*

Perhaps equally important are the elites who have influence in the opposition circles, representing a wide range of individuals from various sectors of society. They frequently lead organizations such as unions, NGOs, and human rights associations which put pressure on the regime and have influence in shaping the discourse of dissent. In a similar way to the ruling elites, opposition actors range in prominence and influence and are most effective when they unite and make common demands. (Cavatorta and Elananza 2008)

Many accounts of the post-communist “colored revolutions” in Eastern Europe emphasized grassroots efforts and argue that opposition mobilization must reach a tipping point that keeps them growing large enough to succeed – and the actions of elites play a decisive role in whether that point comes (D'Anieri 2006). Because the major dissenting voices often emerge from the increasingly politicized civil society groups and associations, who leads them and what they call for come to matter immensely (Cavatorta and Elananza 2008).

In addition to those holding positions of obvious power and influence, certain theories of social movement and collective action push for recognition of roles of the individual. For instance, threshold models (based on rational choice assumptions) have been applied to social movements and protests by people like Schelling (1978), Granovetter (1978), and Lichbach (1995). It examines reasons for joining in protests from the individual perspective and acknowledges that individuals may have different thresholds. Once a critical mass is reached, the balance can be tipped in favor of the opposition and ruling elite decision-making is affected. Thus, the sum of many individuals can also equal political power. One issue with applying this theory is that the threshold can never be known until it has been effectively breached. (D'Anieri 2006)

### *Contingent Relationships*

Ultimately, the various elites in all positions of power do not act in a vacuum. They make decisions based on their relationship to events and in reaction to decisions of other elites, both ruling and opposition. These relationships are framed as either contestation or coordination (Moore and Salloukh 2007). Put another way, King demonstrates the two methods most ruling elites use to deal with the opposition elites: divide and conquer or co-option (King 2009). Others focus on the extent to which official opposition movements have autonomy from the regime itself (Cavatorta and Elananza 2008). In addition to careful study of the interactions between ruling and opposition elite and individuals, it is also essential to examine the level of unity or disunity within each group. For instance, in one study Hale sought to explain what factors lead ruling elites defect from “patronal” presidents in some cases, but not in others (Hale 2006). In the end, the elite decisions and relations are certainly major determinants of political outcomes; however, the word of a monarch is generally not a sufficient argument to explain the complex dynamics moving entire societies.

### Institutions: The Bridge

Institutions – here defined as the formal organizations and informal rules and procedures that structure political conduct, shape interests and structure power relations – are in many ways the bridge between macro-structural variables and human agency (Posusney and Angrist 2005). They are created by macro-structural variables as well as by elites and, once established, institutions both constrain and enable outcomes. In recent years, especially, MENA scholars have begun to focus heavily on how various institutions contribute to both the preservation of authoritarian regimes and the potential for change (Bellin 2004; Lust-Okar 2005; Posusney and Angrist 2005; Entelis 2007; Haklai 2009; King 2009).

### *Access to Formal Political Institutions*

One area looks at the inclusiveness of the political institutions and how it affects regime and opposition interaction. This is effectively demonstrated by Wickham's hypothesis that extremist opposition groups are quickly moderated when given admitted to the world of competitive politics (Wickham 2004). Without access to formal political institutions, informal means to mobilize resources, recruit committed activists, and establish organizational structures must be sought out. For example, Islamic movements in Egypt were only able to mobilize when the organizers began to take advantage of other public gathering spaces – inside the mosque, associations, universities, etc. In fact, the political opportunity structures are shown to have significant influence on opposition choice of strategy and tactics. (Wickham 2002)

Another approach has been to extend the concepts of rational choice to bring attention to the role of formal rules on the strategic calculations of political actors. Examples of these studies include Lust-Okar (2005) who argues that incentive structures created by formal law help secure power in the hands of the regime elites while simultaneously influencing strategic behaviors of opposition movements. Along a similar vein, Posusney (2005) discusses the beneficial effects of electoral rules design. A further related finding shows that if opposition is divided – with some actors included in the political process and other excluded – than transition is more unlikely to occur. Thus, ruling elites can play divide and conquer with the opposition by regulating who can participate in formal institutions, like parliament and political parties (Lust-Okar 2005).

### *Coercive Apparatus*

The repressive capacities of the state are another avenue through which ruling elites can execute their dominance and which constrains the options available to opposition actors.



According to Charles Tilly, state repression is any action from state authorities that “raises the contender’s cost of collective action,” and the forms of repression do not need to be solely military, but can also include restrictions on freedoms of press and expression, to torture and disappearances, to mass arrests and police violence (Hafez 2003; Tilly 1978). Hafez’s important work on this factor clearly evaluates the impact of the state’s coercive institutions. He concludes that indiscriminate, reactive state repression limits options available to opposition movements, and thus yields more violent mobilization. He also argues that pre-emptive state repression limits the opposition’s opportunity structures by preventing time and space for them to develop resources and recruit a base. Thus, the structure imposed by the regime can inhibit or help the ability of the opposition to mobilize people and resources. (Hafez 2003). To many who study authoritarianism in the MENA region, the strength of the coercive apparatus – including the police, military, and *mukhabarat* (intelligence services) goes a long way in explaining the status quo (Entelis 2005). Bellin is one of the strongest proponents of this theory, indicating how a state’s fiscal health, amount of international support, and degree of institutionalization of the military affect the strength of the coercive forces and the actual and perceived threat to the regime’s security (Bellin 2004). Supporting this, Theda Skocpol explains that regimes can survive illegitimacy, value incoherence and relative deprivation as long as their coercive apparatus remain strong. (Skocpol 1979).

### *Organization of Civil Society*

Civil society – understood as “the zone of voluntary associative life beyond family and clan affiliations but separate from the state and the market” can be considered yet another set of institutions which help describe social and political life under authoritarianism (Hawthorne

2004). In many cases, civil society groups are co-opted by the regime elites and form something of a pillar of the regime itself. In that respect, civil society can facilitate pro-regime discourse and activities and further solidify the disciplinary-symbolic power Wedeen speaks of (Wedeen 1999). Cavatorta and Elananza (2008) posit that it is in within whatever autonomous – and increasingly politicized – civil society exists that demands for change can be articulated. Although some argue that the role of civil society in generating change may be overemphasized (Tempest 1997), much new literature incorporates the relationships within civil society and between civil society and the state as a critical component (Cavatorta and Elananza 2008).

Thoughts on the role of civil society have evolved. When civil society was small, people said it was too weak to affect change, but a more robust civil society could. In recent years, with civil societies in some MENA countries strong and diverse, they have had to argue that either it has been too efficiently co-opted or the institutions themselves are not enough (Abootalebi 2000; Norton 2005). An alternative explanation is given by Entelis, who says that it may be the cleavages amongst members of the civil society that prevent the institutions from being effectively leveraged toward mass mobilization (Entelis 2007). In addition, as Moore said “no bourgeoisie, no democracy” – the professional middle class has been apathetic, or even reluctant to participate in politics (418 Moore 1967). Part of this can be seen as a preference for securing economic over political interests. They want a state weak enough to loot, but strong enough to be worth looting. (Entelis 2007)

There is great utility to looking specifically at institutional factors. Once created, they provide the rules of the game and the range of possible actions – essentially dictating the arena in which actors on all sides build relationships with one another and contest power. At the same time, institutions are a tool, not the root explanation of outcomes. In other words, the institutions

can effectively shape the forum for discourse and framework in which power struggles can take place, but they alone do not create or explain the results. (Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth 1992)

### The Search for an Integrative Framework

Societies are by definition complex and it is difficult to tease out singular causal factors. As the discussion above describes, there certainly are factors which can be identified for having a contribution to outcomes, however they cannot be tested in isolation. Instead, a more accurate approach is to lay out the various factors and gain an understanding of their contribution through their interaction with other factors. The division of these factors into prerequisites, human agency, and institutions can help provide a framework with which this sort of analysis can be carried out. Others have before tried to provide a more comprehensive analysis that incorporates these various facets. For instance, Posusney and Angrist (2005) present a collection of the main schools of thought on why MENA regimes persist and place them on a useful grid based on whether they favor state- or society-level factors and also whether they emphasize prerequisites or elite choices. Weaving throughout this, scholars like Bellin and Lust-Okar advocate the role institutions play in mediating the contributions of the state/society factors and the prerequisite and transition factors and Brownlee further elaborates on this interplay of institutions with elite and oppositional actions through a historical-institutional approach. This is, hopefully, only the beginning and future efforts will build on these works to further map the structure and dynamics of political forces in the Middle East and North Africa.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The task now at hand is to explain the recent events in Tunisia and Algeria and understand their different outcomes. As fully as time and resources allow, a methodology has been constructed to best conduct a case study analysis of Tunisia and Algeria, spanning the period immediately prior to December 2010 to the present day. The following is a detailed description of the questions being researched and the procedures used for collecting and analyzing the data.

#### Research Question

The overarching goal of this research is to understand the unrest in Tunisia and Algeria since the end of 2010. Dividing up the challenge into three distinct puzzles, the study tackles the question of prerequisite conditions, elite and institution interactions, and finally the difference between those factors in Tunisia and Algeria. Within each puzzle, moreover, are a number of sub-level questions, outlined here:

*(1) How did prerequisite conditions in Tunisia and Algeria immediately prior to the uprisings inhibit or incite them?*

The first question sets the stage for an analysis of the prerequisites: What are the barriers to change? How have the regimes been able to stay in power for so long? Are there economic

resources contributing to the national income? Has regime legitimacy been bolstered by national history or international support? Is the centralized power in line with cultural norms?

Next, still on the topic of prerequisites: What are the conditions that led to a desire for change? Who wants change? What socioeconomic needs are not being met and how does that impact the demands – is there a call to action to overthrow of the regime, institute political reform, create economic opportunities, etc? Answering these two sets of questions help elucidate the status of the situation prior to the uprisings and develop an understanding of why change was on the agenda and what obstacles stood in the way of change.

*(2) How did relationships between and among ruling and opposition elites, aided by institutional arrangements, shape events?*

The second level of analysis shifts from the preconditions to investigate the interplay of human agency and institutions. First, it asks: Who are the major players? Who are the ruling elites? Who is in the opposition? After identifying who they are, it is asked: What is their relationship to one another? Are they unified internally or divided? Who makes the decisions?

Knowing who the elites are and what they want, however, is not enough. The next question is: by what rules are they playing? In other words, what are the institutions that enable and constrain their actions and relationships? Conversely, it is also important to see how the elites themselves have leveraged the existing institutions and to what end.

*(3) What accounts for the different outcomes in Tunisia and Algeria?*

Finally, when the dynamics of each country are thoroughly analyzed, a side-by-side comparison reveals why, in fact, they did not both lead to a similar result. To do so, the

questions that must be posed include: Were the initial conditions different? How did the elite actors differ? Were there different institutional structures that changed the impact of ruling and oppositional elite actions?

Exhaustive answers to all these questions will likely not be achieved within these pages. The hope, instead, is to provide as much information on the cases as possible and propose educated hypotheses based on the facts gathered. Future works can then build on this with more robust analyses of each of aspect and hopefully further refine the model and its conclusions.

### Data Collection

The best way to pursue answers to these questions was determined to be a combination of interviews and secondary sources. Utilizing both methods ensured that the information gathered was diverse and covered an expansive range of issues and perspectives.

Elite interviewing was the tool of choice because, to date, little scholarship has been written on the subject and so it was necessary to gather information from those intimately involved and with direct knowledge. It was decided that the ideal format for the interviews was a semi-structured model. Such interviews – with a mix of descriptive, causal, consequence and non-directional questions – gave the interviewer enough flexibility to reorder questions, adjust the level of language and seek follow-up to attain greater clarity (Berg 2003). The interviews were framed to elicit the participants' own understandings of the events and their outcomes, which was most useful for testing hypotheses and accessing a deeper level of analysis.

The interviews were conducted by phone and, in one case, by email. The interviewees consisted of an activist, a politician, and three scholars, one of whom preferred to keep comments off the record. Among them were two Tunisians, two Americans, and one from

Algeria. The limited scope of the project, unfortunately, did not allow for more interviews or travel to the region, but future research would certainly benefit from a more rigorous process. Given the resources at hand, however, the results were as robust as could be hoped. Each individual interviewed proved knowledgeable and eloquent and provided deep and provocative insights.

In addition to the interviews, the analysis was also based on secondary sources such as reports from NGOs and research organizations, other scholars' field work, press releases, speeches, and other media that reported on the events in question. The collected information, combined with the insights from the interviews, was then appropriately catalogued and analyzed based on their relevance to the research questions.

One challenge encountered was that the journalistic sources that reported as the events unfolded often contained inaccurate or incomplete details. Because of that, great care was taken to test the validity of each source by comparing multiple articles related to the same topic. Another limitation of the study was linguistics. While some Arabic sources were consulted, the lack of native fluency prevented a comprehensive analysis of those sources. Also, information written in French – a language commonly spoken in both Tunisia and Algerian – was not included in the study.

### Analytical Framework

Research on the Middle East and North Africa is entering a new phase. With change taking place all over the region, the old emphasis on authoritarianism must shift to include an understanding of political changes. Haklai (2009) suggests the even bigger goals of beginning in earnest the process of building and applying comprehensive theories to the region – thus

eliminating the tendencies to brush it aside MENA “exceptionalism.” The mode he says will get us there faster, moreover, is to combine case study analysis with the testing of competing causal hypothesis. Closing the old chasm between area studies and the social sciences makes for a richer and more substantive vehicle for understanding and that is the method pursued here. (Posusney and Angrist 2005; Brownlee 2007).

The development of the analytical framework took into consideration all of the variables being studied by experts on the region. The system that they are trying to describe is complex, best summed up by a quote from Daniel Brumberg:

In the Arab world, a set of interdependent institutional, economic, ideological, social, and geostrategic factors has created an adaptable ecology of repression, control, and partial openness. The web-like quality of this political ecosystem both helps partial autocracies to survive and makes their rulers unwilling to give up *final* control over any strand of the whole” (Brumberg 2002, 57)

Elucidating how this web of factors operates is the broad goal of this paper. To that end, the following builds on the various competing explanations and prior attempts to propose an overarching framework. This tool can then be applied to describe the relationship between the most compelling factors and their contribution to outcomes, whether it be a continued status quo or political change. The simple graphic and explanation depict the three categories (prerequisites, human agency, and institutions) which presumable comprise the “political ecosystem” that Brumberg describes.



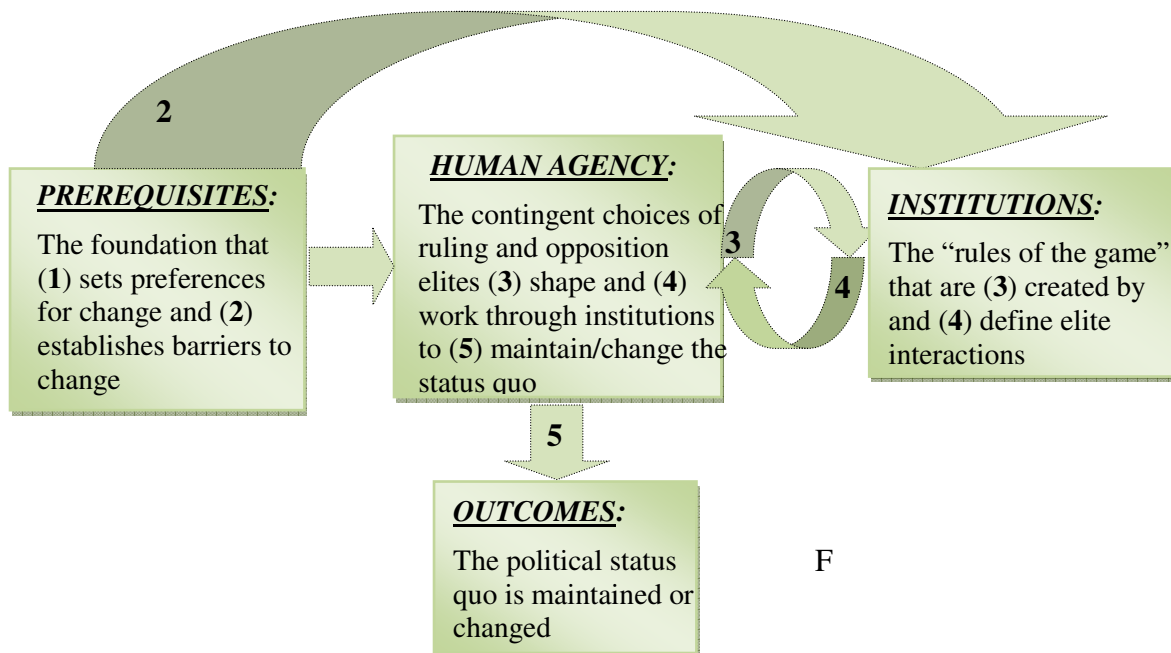


Figure 1

Prerequisites serve two purposes: (1) shaping the preferences of the elite for or against change and (2) establishing barriers to change by shaping the structure of institutions. These are the particular socioeconomic, historical, and cultural conditions that make political change more or less desirable – and more or less possible. In addition, the macro-structural variables also play a role in shaping the character of the institutions. In the next box, human agency is defined as the contingent choices of both ruling and oppositional elites. Their preferences and allocation of resources are shaped by the prerequisite conditions. The elites then shape the structure of institutions (for instance by reforming the constitution or forming a coalition of civil society groups). At the same time, they must then play by the rules of the institutions, both formal and informal, that they have established. Operating in this environment, ruling and opposition elites contend with each other for power. Institutions, as noted above are shaped by both the environment created by prerequisites and by the actions of elites. Once created, they define the

power relationship between actors by mediating the communication between them, range of possible actions, and impact of each elite decision.

The outcomes are a result of sum of elite choices which are constrained by and manifest through the institutions. The hypothesis is that, ultimately, political change will only come when there is a strong preference for change among the elites. Actions for or against change are then be acted upon through the various institutions. If those in favor of change are stronger than those against, or are otherwise able to convince or coerce them through institutional means, then the outcome will be change. If, however, the ruling elites are able to keep the balance of power in their favor and there are no effective institutional means for the opposition to overcome that, then the status quo is maintained. Different balances of these factors lead to different outcomes and can explain political change – or the lack thereof – throughout the Middle East and North Africa, and perhaps in other parts of the world as well.

This diagram may seem simplistic, but hopefully it reveals some truths about the dynamics that encourage or inhibit political change. It incorporates many variables and accounts for the complex and nuanced relationships between them. With this framework in mind, the events in Tunisia and Algeria can hopefully be methodically analyzed and discussed.

## CHAPTER 4

### TUNISIA

An independent state since 1956, Tunisia has maintained impressive stability over the past half a century. Its economic development and outstanding welfare indicators has led Tunisia to be hailed as a North African success story (Versi 2009). That said, the forces that ousted President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali did not emerge out of thin air. While barriers to change remained strong, the discontent of the largely middle-class population was rising. When the floodgates were opened for protest to occur, the opportunity structures allowed for effective mobilization of the opposition. Coupled with the ineffective responses of the government and defection of the military, Ben Ali was taken down faster than anyone had previously thought possible.

#### Prerequisite Conditions

##### *Barriers to Change*

True to the predominant themes in the literature, the discussion starts with the presumed reasons why change could not happen. For Tunisia, there are four relevant prerequisite factors. First is the historical legitimacy of the regime acquired from the leadership's role in the independence movement, which was then perpetuated by its ability to maintain stability in the face of the perceived Islamist threat. Second is the economic success. While development has undoubtedly been uneven, it has benefited the regime and made it stronger. Third, the

international support for the regime – and disinterest in its abuses – has given it the freedom to pursue its objectives unchallenged. Finally, issues of culture have merit, not due to an Islamist proclivity for authoritarianism, but rather due to the lack of experience with democracy and the efficient repression of dissent that has been cultivated by the regime.

### Historical Legitimacy and Stability

Tunisia was colonized by the French in 1881 and remained a protectorate until guerrilla armed resistance and a series of negotiations with the French led to independence in 1956. The natural leader to fill the void left by French administrators was the Neo-Dustur (“constitution”) Movement headed by Habib Bourguiba. Founded in 1934, Neo-Dustur was the face of the resistance against the French and thus had the loyalty of the people. After a brief power struggle, Bourguiba took the presidency. As anti-French rhetoric became less salient, the new regime successfully rallied the people behind its social and economic policies, easily consolidating power under the premise state-building. The Neo-Dustur built a political party with broad membership and no opposition. The regime came to stand for socialism, gender equality, education for all, and secularism (although Bourguiba did not eliminate religion, but rather ensured state control of it). The public approval was not unanimous, but any opposition – mainly from those supporting Bourguiba’s exiled rival Salah ben Yusuf and some in the religious establishment – was effectively co-opted with economic incentives or suppressed. (Perkins 2004)

When socialist economic policies backfired, the resulting crisis led to demonstrations and unrest. As Bourguiba’s behavior became increasingly erratic under the continually deteriorating economic conditions, the then Prime Minister Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, in accordance with the constitutional provisions, had Bourguiba declared unfit to rule and took over in a peaceful

transition to power. At this point, no one was saddened to see Bourguiba go. Moreover, Ben Ali had become popular after negotiating with Bourguiba not to execute several key opposition leaders and so he took office with considerable goodwill of the people behind him. (Perkins 2004)

Over the next two decades, Ben Ali adapted the institutions when needed to reassert his dominance. At first, he cautiously opened the political system up by legalizing opposition parties, welcoming exiled leaders home, releasing detainees, and modernizing other state institutions. He also renamed the Neo-Dustur party the Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD). This season of revitalized political participation and freedom ended, however, when Islamist opposition became visible. In 1989, a massive repression of the Islamists commenced – effectively destroying the movement. Moreover, the regime broadened its repressive policies to silence all, even secular, opposition. As Tunisia integrated with the global economy, it tried out a new state-controlled pluralism that permitted formal political participation for legalized opposition parties, but at the same time ensured that previously free social spaces like mosques and universities were tightly monitored and controlled. Thus, a sophisticated system of formal, but token opposition participation gave the appearance of pluralism, while all other forms of real dissent were repressed. (Erdle 2004)

### Economic Success and International Support

Perhaps one of the most important factors contributing to Tunisia's political stability has been its fiscal health. While it lacks significant natural resources, Tunisia's geographic location and strategically neutral foreign policy has enabled it to become an effective bridge for trade Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Since the late 1980s, the country's pragmatic development

strategies, with a focus on export-led industrialization, led to a consistent growth average of about 5% yearly (Versi 2009; Tunisia: Financial Sector Profile 2010). With its impressive, stable growth, Tunisia has secured a better standard of living for the substantial middle class and an engaged community of foreign investors who are attracted by low labor costs, low tax rates, and stability (Boubekeur 2009). In fact, Tunisia's Economic Processing Zones boasts over 3,000 foreign companies and their exports – about 47% of GDP – are facilitated by an extensive free-trade agreement with the EU (Tunisia: Financial Sector Profile 2010).

In the early 2000s, efforts at economic and political reforms, called *Mise à Niveau* (“Upgrades”), began in full swing – working to improve infrastructure and domestic production processes, as well as expanding information and communications technology (ITC) to foster a more knowledge-based economy. In addition, important strides were also being made to promote universal education, women's rights, and poverty reduction. As a result of these policies, Tunisia landed the top slot in the World Economic Forum's African Competitiveness ranking; they placed 40<sup>th</sup> in the world, above at least 20 EU members (Versi 2009).

The economic success did much to help maintain the political status quo. First, the international support for the regime has been strong. Europe, in particular, sees Tunisia as a vital trading partner. The political stability benefited the many European investors who saw Tunisia as a secure and profitable market for their capital – thus no pressure was exerted on the regime to reform, but rather it was encouraged to keep up the good work. In addition, while Tunisia's private sector is strong, the state still holds the reins to the economy. In fact the family of President Ben Ali, the Trabelsis, is its biggest beneficiary with as much as 30-40% of the economy said to be under their control. Their assets included vast real estate, banks, insurance, tourism, and much more. Likewise, the system for dealing out contracts and capital is still

marked by intense crony capitalism (Lewis 2011). Thus, while the overall economy remained robust and living standards high, the regime was still able to control distribution of resources and made use of it as both economic and political capital.

### Social Contract

One aspect that is often referred to with respect to Tunisia is the acceptance of a social contract: economic prosperity in return for restricted political rights. For many years, this seemed to have had the implicit support of the Tunisian people, many of whom benefited from the availability of education, high levels of home ownership, and the other aspects of a middle class society (Arieff 2011). An additional cultural factor that contributed to this social contract is that, of all the Muslim-majority countries, Tunisia is perhaps the most secular. Although political Islam was brutally repressed two decades ago and has made no resurgence, the possibility of an Islamist takeover has continued to serve as justification for a strong state. The repression of the rest of the society, moreover, pushed all dissent underground and left the public sphere – including the robust civil society and business community that emerged over the years – in compliance with the regime. (Angrist 1999)

### *Desire for Change*

#### Economic Inequity

Despite the Tunisian economy's laudable successes, significant challenges still plagued it at the microeconomic level. (Boubekeur 2009). The financial crisis of 2008-2009, while its effects on Tunisia were limited, exacerbated some of the core economic struggles of the population. The inflation rate, for instance, experienced moderate growth, rising to 5.1% by the

first quarter of 2008, causing a steep increase of the relative food prices (Country Report: Tunisia December 2010). Moreover, one of the economy's most stubborn issues before the crisis – unemployment – also worsened. Although rates are not entirely reliable, general unemployment was estimated at 14.1% in 2008 and recent university graduates in the 20-24 age range were starkly and disproportionately affected (*Tunisia: Overview* 2010). Money from the important tourism industry and remittances also fell (Tunisia: Financial Sector Profile 2010; Country Report: Tunisia January 2009). All in all, while the economy was good shape compared to the rest of the region, recent years saw disparities rising, particularly with respect to unemployment.

Another source of extreme frustration for Tunisians was the rampant corruption. While used by Ben Ali to buy favors and co-opt potential opposition figures, the general population did not reap any benefits (Kirkpatrick 2011). While the revelation did not tell Tunisians anything they didn't already know, the Tunisia-related Wikileaks released just a few months before the uprisings showed the extent that corrupt practices prevailed and revealed that the US government was also aware of them and was not supportive. An excerpt from one of the cables written by US ambassador to Tunisia, Robert F. Godec, aptly sums up the prevalence of corruption and the ill-will it engendered:

Often referred to as a quasi-mafia, an oblique mention of 'the Family' is enough to indicate which family you mean. Seemingly half of the Tunisian business community can claim a Ben Ali connection through marriage, and many of these relations are reported to have made the most of their lineage. Ben Ali's wife, Leila Ben Ali, and her extended family – the Trabelsis – provoke the greatest ire from Tunisians. (Godec 2008)

The perception that a few privileged elites were benefiting while the rest of the country suffered presented a tremendous disparity in the public mind. More than simple deprivation was the feeling of “being cheated” (Rimas 2011). Speaking out against these unfair conditions,



however, was not tolerated. At the most, there was a small tolerance for the airing of economic grievances, but even that was limited. In fact, the most significant unrest Tunisia had experienced over any issues – economic or political – in the recent years, for example, were demonstrations held in the mining region of Gafsa in 2008 and again in early 2010, fueled by unemployment. In response, the government promptly sent in the army to aid police in containing protesters and arresting participants. (Arief 2011)

### Restrictions on Political and Civil Liberties

Tunisia has long been regarded as one of the most politically repressive states in the region. The lengths to which Ben Ali, assisted by the *mukhabarat*, went to suppress dissent on all levels were truly extensive:

The government routinely infringed on citizens' privacy rights and imposed severe restrictions on freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and association. It was intolerant of public criticism and used intimidation, criminal investigations, the court system, arbitrary arrests, residential restrictions, and travel controls to discourage human rights and opposition activists. (Arief 2011)

Amnesty International criticized the regime for its subversive campaigns against human rights and other organizations that expressed unfavorable opinions. Illegal detainment and torture were routinely committed in the name of counterterrorism and all potential dissidents were closely monitored by the *mukhabarat* and subject to a variety of censorship mechanisms. The level of direct control the government had over media and freedom of expression is demonstrated by the fact that even internet cafes were state-controlled (Amnesty International 2010; Arief 2011).

In this repressive atmosphere, thus, the limited outward defiance of the state nonetheless covered the façade of true internal distaste for the regime's rule. The feeling of resentment was strengthened by the fact that Tunisia's population of 10 million is increasingly educated and well off. In 2009, well over 300,000 students were enrolled in university programs, average yearly income per capita is over \$9,500, an incredibly low 3.8% of the population is below the poverty line, and literacy is almost 75% – some of the top statistics in the region. With almost a tenth of the country living in the capital, Tunis, and over a third of the country connected to the internet, moreover, it is a well-educated, well-informed, close society (*Tunisia: Country Profile* 2011; Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs 2010). It is from within this context of a rising middle class society met with restrictive political rights and unfair distribution of wealth that the situation reached a boiling point.

### The “Jasmine Revolution”

#### *Revolution Incited*

Almost all accounts of Tunisia's “Jasmine Revolution” begin by paying homage to the unemployed twenty-six year-old, Mohamed Bouazizi, who set himself on fire in the central-western city of Sidi Bouzid on December 17<sup>th</sup>. His story, tragic and compelling, has become the stuff of legends and he is hailed as the hero of the revolutionary narrative. But, while he served as the trigger, the forces at work were much larger than him. In recent memory, two others before him self-immolated in similar protest, but the circumstances in this case amounted to the perfect storm: the prerequisite anger at the regime and the unity and capacity of the opposition allowed one man's sacrifice to mobilize the masses. (Macintyre 2011; Abouzeid 2011)

### *Quiet Opposition Turned Unified Front*

Within days of Bouazizi's self-immolation, citizens from every sector of society – students, teachers, lawyers, journalists, human rights activities, trade unionists, and opposition politicians – all took to the streets. This impressive showing of unity emerged from a quiet, but well-organized civil society and groups in both official and unofficial opposition. Over the years, a diverse range of social organizations was achieved by largely steering clear of contentious political issues and instead focusing on philanthropy, culture, etc. Officially, thousands of NGOs exist and there are even eight official opposition political parties. Some organizations, like the Tunisian League for Human Rights (LTDH) and the National Council for Liberty in Tunisia, toed the line of acceptable activities by working toward general political aims not at odds with the regime. The majority of civil society organizations, moreover, were carefully managed by the regime – either created by government elites, co-opted by development aid allocations, or threatened with repression (Erdle 2004; Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs 2010). More robust resistance was mostly pushed underground or to exile in Europe to avoid repressive crackdowns. While there are legal oppositional political parties like the Democratic Socialist Movement (MDS) and the Republican Congress, their limited impact in parliament had left their ranks of supporters depleted. (Erdle 2004)

Although the opposition elite had not been vocal in their dissent previously – and popular mobilization in the form of protests was almost completely forbidden – the indignity over Bouazizi's treatment was described as the “straw that broke the camel's back” (Romdhani 2011). When the conditions were right, the institutions through which protest could be organized were available for the opposition to take advantage of – and take advantage they did. Coupled with the effective leveraging of social media applications, for instance, the uploading of YouTube

videos by Bouazizi's cousin Ali, information was quickly spread and mass mobilization happened almost spontaneously. (Schaar 2011)

In particular, the established and prominent Tunisian General Labor Union (UGTT) took the lead, organizing rallies around their headquarters in cities throughout the country (Rifai 2011). According to Messaoud Romdhani, who has a long career of activism with the union, the slogans quickly evolved from centering on unemployment to a set of unified political and economic demands: dignity, an end to corruption, and freedom and democracy (Romdhani 2011). But it was not left entirely to the labor community. In late December, the lawyers also began to organize themselves. Their rallies across Tunisia intensified when some fellow lawyers were arrested and tortured and it was reported that 95% of Tunisia's 8,000 lawyers participated in a strike in solidarity with the protestors against police brutality (AFP 2010).

### *Regime Elite Reactions*

The Ben Ali government was held together at the top with a core of informal rules and structures surrounding the president. The core elites were those who head the "power ministries" like the *mukhabarat* (security apparatus) home affairs, and economic portfolios; political advisors in the palace; and those affiliated with Ben Ali's family, the "presidential relatives." Together, they comprise the undisputed powerhouse of the government where decisions are made and executed (Erdle 2004, 214). Throughout the period following Bouazizi's self-immolation, the orders were, no doubt, still coming from the top. Both Ben Ali and his key ministers played active and visible roles in responding to the protests. While the Ben Ali circle of elites reacted in unison, there was the sense that they were not prepared for the strength of the opposition (Schaar 2011).

As the protests broke out in Sidi Bouzid, the development minister, Mohamed Nouri Jouini, went to the region in person to announce a \$10 million employment plan (Saleh 2010). Four days later, however, the protests were continuing to expand throughout the country: hundreds of protesters rallied by the UGTT headquarters in al-Ragab and Miknassi thousands of people in Menzel Bouzaïene attacked the RCD offices (Saleh 2010). Soon, demonstrations emerged in Kairouan, Sfax, and Ben Guerdane. The union headquarters continued to serve as rallying points as the numbers swelled into the thousands of protesters in many cities. (Rifai 2011)

As the demonstrations gained steam, the security forces were mobilized. Crackdowns were ordered and many people were injured and even killed – although an interior ministry spokesperson claimed the security forces only shot in self-defense. On January 11<sup>th</sup>, Ben Ali announced a curfew and deployed the army into the capital Tunis. Over the course of the month, the security forces used tear gas and guns, killing dozens of protesters. (Byrne and Khalaf 2011; Gunshots fired as Tunis protests continue 2011; Tunisia: 11 die in new clashes after weeks of unrest)

### *Ben Ali's Personal Appeal*

President Ben Ali attempted to personally appeal to the people to cease the protesting. Almost two weeks after Mohamed Bouazizi lit himself on fire, Ben Ali went to visit him. When Bouazizi died a few days later, however, 5,000 people marched in his funeral. On December 28<sup>th</sup>, Ben Ali broadcast a national television address criticizing “the use of violence in the streets by a minority of extremists,” threatening repression, and warning of the negative impact protests would have on the economy. He sacked many of his ministers and governors of several

provinces on charges related to the uprising. None of these actions seemed to have an effect on the demands of the people. (Bowring 2011; Cook 2011)

### *Disintegration of Regime Order*

Tunisians were able to follow the events as activists updated their statuses on YouTube and Facebook and Al Jazeera provided continual coverage. The media facilitated the spread of up-to-date and accurate information and allowed for easier coordination between opposition actors. More than that, it eliminated the government's control over information. A huge symbolic break with the regime order came when the national Tunisian television, Nessma TV, broke their silence on the protests on December 29<sup>th</sup> (AFP 2010; Rifai 2011). If the rise of the citizens was not enough of an indication that the old rules had fallen, this proved that the course of events was turning past the point of no return.

In an attempt to regain that lost control, the government initiated a systematic "phishing" operation and they arrested bloggers and web activists, as well as a rapper who had published a critical song online. These efforts to quell online dissent proved to be, not only woefully inadequate, but also showed that the government was losing its grip. (Ryan 2011)

### *International Reaction*

By January, the international community was closely following the events. The US State Department produced a statement criticizing Ben Ali's regime for its interference with the internet (Lister 2011). A few days later, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton noted her concern about instability in Tunisia, as well as the "underlying concerns of the people" (Clinton 2011). On the other hand, the regime did receive some support from the French. In particular several

cabinet ministers and Foreign Minister Michele Alliot-Marie suggested that French riot police be sent to assist in restoring order (No sign of an end 2011). The messages ceased to be mixed, however, when the European Union announced it would not accept “the disproportionate use of force by the police against peaceful protesters” (Byrne and Khalaf 2011). Consensus seems to be, however, that the international role was minimal. At most, it removed another element of Ben Ali’s legitimacy and factored into his decision to flee; at the least, it may have further emboldened the protesters.

### *Final Concessions: Too Little too Late*

After the army presence and curfews failed to affect the tens of thousands of people who continued to march, Ben Ali and his Prime Minister Rachid Ghannouchi announced a slew of concessions. Among the promised concessions, they said detainees would be released, corruption would be investigated, 300,000 jobs would be created for graduates over the course of the next two years, and by 2012 all unemployed graduates would be given jobs. Ben Ali ordered the government to cut prices on sugar, milk, and bread, fired his cabinet, promised to hold parliamentary elections within six months, and declared that he would not seek another term as president. At the same, however, armored army vehicles moved into the heart of the capital. (Bowring 2011; Coke 2011)

On January 13<sup>th</sup>, hundreds of protesters ransacked the mansion of a presidential relative – destroying one of the most hated symbols of the regime. That night, Ben Ali gave a 10 minute speech to the nation. For the first time, he expressed remorse over the deaths of protesters and said he was “sad about what is happening now after 50 years of service to the country” (Coke 2011). He also said he had ordered security forces not to use live rounds against demonstrators.

For the few days before, the demonstrators had witnessed the military forces backing up from key positions in the capital. It later emerged that the chief of the Tunisian army, General Rachid Ammar, had refused Ben Ali's orders to fire (Arieff 2011). When the protesters saw that the army and police were keeping to the sidelines, their numbers increased to the thousands (Chick 2011). Among the largely affluent crowd were doctors, lawyers, and other young professionals, as well as a large numbers of young women (Kirkpatrick 2011; Heron, Erlangers, and El-Naggar 2011).

The next morning, President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali had fled to Saudi Arabia, leaving the government in the care of the Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi. The protests did not stop there and Ghannouchi was eventually forced to step down as well. While the shape of the future government is uncertain, the Tunisian people successfully knocked down a seemingly indomitable authoritarian regime due to a combination of widespread disgust with the government, opposition solidarity, and ruling elite defection and mismanagement of the state institutions that have kept them in power in the past. (Ben Bouazza 2011; Rifai 2011)

### Explaining the Outcome: Successful Political Change

No one predicted that Ben Ali could fall so fast and so easily. Looking at the events, however, there was an optimum combination prerequisite, elite, and institutional factors, including the level of public discontent, the elite actions and reactions, and institutional resources that helped facilitate that actions of the opposition and failed to support the regime.



### *Prerequisites*

The barriers to change were present: political and economic power was concentrated firmly in the hands of Ben Ali, his extended family, and a close circle of advisors, the economy was performing well at the macro-level, and the suppression of dissent seemed as effective as ever. However, the young, educated population saw the rising disparities between what they could achieve with their university diplomas, both compared to similarly educated people in liberal democratic countries and compared to the unfairly privileged regime elites. This, coupled with the severe repression, created an underground powder keg of discontent.

### *Elite Arrangements*

One of the puzzles is why Mohamed Bouazizi was the most effective and timely trigger for the mass mobilization. Certainly, the desire for change was growing, but there is no way to measure how and why the transition from thought to action occurred. This instance, as John Entelis aptly remarked, social science must relegate the unknown to the unexplainable “x-factor” (Entelis 2011). Similarly, it is hard to explain how the underground discontent was able to so effectively transform into unified opposition front. Nonetheless, the unity of the labor unions, the lawyers, the human rights groups, etc transcended all societal differences and presented the most effective set of unanimous political and economic demands.

In contrast, the decision-making for the regime was concentrated in the hands of one man: President Ben Ali. To his credit, he adopted a dual strategy that has often been successful in the past – repression and concessions. However, his reactions were too little, too late and neither the threat of force or the promise of reform was credible. Furthermore, the lynchpin of his power – the control over dissent and the coercive apparatus – failed him when internet

repression failed and General Ammar defected. With that, he lost his power and the only option left to him was to leave.

### *Institutions*

All of the demands against the government could not have been effectively leveraged by the population in the absence of mass participation in the protests. Some of this is attributable to pure individual initiative and courage. That said, credit must be given to the existence of organizational and communication structures that turned the uprising from each man individually into a visible coalition of union workers, lawyers, and other organizations that ended their silence and leveraged their networks. Without their using their organizational capacities toward the same purpose, the Jasmine Revolution might have remained disparate, local protest movements.

An equally, if not more important institutional role in this story was that of the security apparatus. Built by Ben Ali and used by him many times successfully, this time the will to use force was limited, perhaps not according to the president, but certainly from the perspective of the individuals being asked to shoot. As a result, Ben Ali's greatest strength turned against him and his ability to maintain coercive power over the population ended.

A final note must be made about the role of media. While claims of a "Twitter Revolution" are clearly overplayed, the underground networks of activists and the quick disbursement of information was not possible in previous years. Thus, while the media did not cause the revolution and it did not play a definitive role in whether it failed or succeeded, there is something to be said for its ability to facilitate action. Moreover, since one of the hallmarks of Ben Ali's repression was strict control over information in the public sphere, the loss of that control once Nessma TV began broadcasting events was further delegitimization of his authority.

## CHAPTER 5

### ALGERIA

The evolution of the modern Algerian state, while marked by different milestones and circumstances, has nonetheless produced an authoritarian model as formidable as Tunisia's. In recent months, Algeria has likewise been impacted by the "Arab Spring" that swept the region. In contrast with Tunisia, however, it has resulted in a far less dramatic outcome. While concessions were made and reforms promised, there is nothing to suggest the regime elites have truly surrendered any power. The following analysis makes clear how the *pouvoir* ("power") is strategically positioned at the apex of the military and economic institutions, and while the opposition desires change, they remain divided and, due to the historical failure of revolution, are not as confident that a solution can be brought about through a mass uprising.

#### Prerequisite Conditions

##### *Barriers to Change*

There are many conditions helping to maintain the Algerian regime. As with Tunisia, it starts with the historical legitimacy and the regime as a source of stability in the face of Islamist threats. Unlike Tunisia, it has been supported by its natural resource wealth. International alliances, particularly with respect to counterterrorism, have played a role, too. Finally, the demographics and geography have made for a more diverse cultural landscape that may be yet another factor allowing the centralized regime to assert such effective control without opposition.

## Historical legitimacy and Stability

The modern borders of what is known today as Algeria were created by the French when they claimed it as a colony in 1830. Despite the early and constant resistance efforts of the indigenous population, France created in Algeria what is considered the “archetype of a settler colonial regime” (Ruedy 2005, 69). Unlike most other colonial territories, the French came to consider Algeria part of France. Because of the great reluctance of the French to leave, it took around eight years of brutal fighting and protracted negotiations, led by a small guerrilla group called the National Liberation Front (FLN), to earn Algeria its independence (Evans and Phillips 2007; Ruedy 2005). The transition to independence in 1962, however, was not easy. The physical costs of the war were immense with a death toll in the hundreds of thousands, 3 million Algerians displaced, and villages and infrastructure destroyed. To make matters worse, with the enemy defeated, a power struggle then commenced between the disparate leaders of the revolution. A purging of the 1 million French residents, *pieds-noir*, and the Algerians loyal to France, *harkis*, was a cause of even more bloodshed and also capital flight. (Ruedy 2005)

After the French gradually phased out their administration of the colony under the terms of the Evian Accords, a referendum overwhelmingly approved Algerian independence. One year after declaring independence, revolutionary leader Ahmed Ben Bella was popularly elected President, but his rule was short-lived. In a coup orchestrated by the military, Ben Bella was ousted and hand-picked members of FLN were placed in positions of power. His successor, former Minister of Defense Colonel Houari Boumediene, presided over a government that drew its legitimacy from the revolution and was duly beholden to the military whose influence was executed by its top leaders on the Council of the Revolution. And with this, the transition to a functioning state began. (Cook 2007)

Boumediene laid a foundation for the new Algerian state grounded in a broad appeal to nationalism and socialist values. In order to consolidate centralized rule in a country rife with tribal identities, he expanded the authority of the national army and built up an effective, but greatly feared Sécurité Militaire (SM). With respect to Islam, Boumediene took a pragmatic approach, making Islamic and Arab identity pillars of a unified Algerian state, but at the same time maintained firm state control over its practice. (Evans and Phillips 2007) In 1976, Boumediene passed the National Charter to reinforce the power of the presidency and the FLN. With that legacy, he died two years later and was replaced by senior military officer Colonel Chadli Bendjedid. Under Bendjedid, continued economic deterioration led to social unrest in all sectors of society (Ruedy 2005). After brutally repressing popular riots in 1988, the government moved to make politics more inclusive. Immediately, dozens of parties emerged – most notably the militant Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). (Chalala 1999)

When FIS undisputedly took the lead in national elections, the army annulled the results and commenced a crackdown on the Islamists. Driven underground, the Islamists were subject to mass arrests, torture, disappearances, and deportation to the Sahara. In response, the Islamists began their own brutal attacks, including civilian massacres and the targeting of Algerian intellectuals. Most of the perpetrators were members of the fundamentalist Armed Islamic Group (GIA) (Singer 1994; Viorst 1997; Chalala 1999). While there were a limited number of attempts to resolve the violence – including a brief dialogue initiated by the new President Liamine Zeroual and mediation by a small Catholic NGO called the Community of Sant'Egidio, the hard-line military faction led by Army Chief of Staff Muhammed Lamari refused to cooperate and the efforts failed. Intense fighting continued into the late 1990s and resulted in over a hundred thousand deaths. The violence eventually ebbed as the government forces gained

the upper hand and, in January 2000, the FIS disbanded their armed wing (Battersby 1994).

While the government has not been shy about using force, it was ultimately viewed the strong state as a legitimate and necessary protector from the threat of Islamist takeover or chaos.

### Resource Wealth

While micro-level economic indicators are poor with almost one-fourth of the population is below the poverty line and the unemployment rate is at least 10%, the Algerian government is fairly well-off relative thanks to its hydrocarbon resources. With its reserves of natural gas ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in the world and oil reserves at 16<sup>th</sup>, Algeria has been able to keep debt to about 1% of GDP, amass large amounts of foreign currency, and maintain a significant hydrocarbon stabilization fund. Accounting for around 30% of GDP, oil and natural gas are the unequivocal drivers of the economy. The resource curse has prevented broad economic development in other sectors, thus accounting for the poor domestic economy. However, the money is well-spent on elite regime priorities – like the military *pouvoir* – without being accountable to the people.

*(Algeria: Country Profile 2011)* (Country Report: Algeria 2011)

The real force behind their wealth management is the company in charge of the hydrocarbon industries, SONATRACH. As the 9<sup>th</sup> largest company in the world, it wields considerable financial clouts. Moreover, it is an integral part of the regime itself, immune from economic liberalization schemes and beholden to the will of the people. In short, SONATRACH is the regime's "most lucrative source of patronage, privilege, and power" (Entelis 1999, 10)

### International Support

After his election in 1999, President Bouteflika traveled played an integral role in opening up Algeria's foreign relations with its neighboring countries in the Middle East and

North Africa and also with the West. Algeria is an active member in both regional and international organizations, including the Arab League, Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the UN, where Algeria served as a nonpermanent member on the UN Security Council from January 2004- December 2005 (Cook 2007). At the same time, relations with Morocco have been cool due to Algeria's support for the Polisario Front – a group seeking independence for the indigenous Saharawi people in Western Sahara, a region Morocco currently claims. While this has inhibited greater regional cooperation, in some ways Algeria has used the security dilemma as an opportunity to assert its dominance as the regional power. (Arieff 2011)

The real source of international support for the regime, however, has been its Western alliances against terrorism. In 2006, al-Qaeda and the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) merged to create al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). They have claimed responsibility for multiple kidnappings, bombings and suicide attacks in Algeria. For instance, in December 2007, they bombed the UN headquarters in Algiers and the Constitutional Council, resulting in the death of more than 60 people. Since they mostly target the government and foreigners, it has created a common cause between the West and the Algerian government and has resulted in a robust campaign of joint counterterrorism initiatives. (CIA 2011; Arieff 2011)

### Culture

While Islam's compatibility with democracy is often questioned in debates on political change in Muslim-majority countries, Algeria convolutes this claim. The history of government-Islamist clashes can be perceived two ways. In one respect, the Islamist political movements have indeed been the strongest advocates of democracy and their opposition has weakened regime legitimacy. At the same time, however, the government has used the excuse of the

Islamist threat to further consolidate its power and its coercive forces. Perhaps more important than the relative perspectives on Islam, however, the lesson Algerians remember from the civil war is that popular revolutions do not always work. Their riots in 1988 did lead to the desired political opening. Only a few years into the democratic experiment, however, it fell into chaos when the military felt the need to reassert itself over the opposition. The ramifications of this violence are still felt today, moreover, as over 7,000 “disappeared” Algerians remain unaccounted for. The fear that another popular revolution could result in similar destruction is a very legitimate aspect of the Algerian psychology. (Entelis 2011; Cavatorta and Elananza 2008)

Another aspect of the Algerian cultural dynamics can be explained through the demographics and geography of the country. With the succession of South Sudan, Algeria will officially become the largest state in Africa, and its terrain is divided by two large mountain ranges. The society is thus not as connected as the tiny, urban networks of Tunisia. Furthermore, there is a significant cleavage between those who identify as Arab and those who consider themselves Berber (about 15% of the population) (Evans and Phillips 2007). This tension in recent years has centered on the predominantly Berber region of Kabylie where activists have consistently demanded official recognition of their language, Tamazight, compensation for the deaths of protesters, more economic development, and greater regional autonomy. In 2001, Tamazight was recognized as a national language, but it is a step down from an official language and thus the issue remains contentious. (Ruedy 2005)



## *Drivers of Change*

### Lack of Economic Opportunities

Despite the great wealth of the nation, an important missing aspect of its economic policies has been initiatives to alleviate the major issues faced by its citizens daily, including poverty, high youth unemployment, massive housing shortages, and a dearth in important public services such as electricity and water (Norton 2005). Recognizing the need to address the serious economic disparities and unequal development, the government recently announced a five-year \$286 billion development program. The expensive plan will come at the expense of national debt and it is certainly will not be enough to solve the underlying issues. Moreover, due to widespread corruption among those at the top, there is broad skepticism that the money will go toward helping those in need. There is even a term – *hogra* – which is used to describe the seeming indifference of ruling elites to rest of the population (Country Report: Algeria 2011). More so than the basic presence of poverty, the sense of abandonment by the wealthy elite state structure is likely to be the factor inciting popular resentment.

In fact, by December, there had already been weeks of simmering anger and small demonstrations focused on the worsening crisis in housing and jobs. Youth unemployment had reached, by some estimates, more than 20%. Adding to that were the sudden and unprecedented increases in the price of commodities like sugar, cooking oil, and wheat (Blas and Khalaf 2011). There is no effective metric to measure levels of frustration, but these deteriorating economic conditions, juxtaposed with the continued success of the hydrocarbon industries, are certainly sufficient grounds for unrest.

### Restrictions on Political and Civil Liberties

Unlike in Tunisia, where every dissenting opinion was repressed, the Algerian regime today allows for distinctly more freedom. Their press is one of the most vibrant in the region and demonstrations are common occurrences. Still, Algeria is ranked by Freedom House as “not free” in both civil and political liberties. This is due to a variety of issues, including rampant corruption, lack of judiciary independence and rule of law, and limitations on political participation (Joffe-Walt 2010). While opposition exists and demonstrations and critical publications are not uncommon, there remain limits on the extent to which opposition grievances can affect change. In cases of significant economic unrest, the government typically produces concessions and handouts to placate the unrest but, simultaneously arrests leaders of the demonstrations to show that there are also consequences. In formal political institutions, opposition political parties are also allowed a measure of rhetorical independence, but they are not able to achieve change against the wishes of the regime. (Evans and Phillips 2007)

### Algerian Participation in the “Arab Spring”

With the increasingly unlivable economic conditions, Algerian opposition began to do what they have frequently done in the past – protest. The ability of these protests to create political change were subject to all the elements of the political ecosystem discussed previously, however, and Algeria’s experience with the “Arab Spring” was particularly affected by the level of elite organization and cohesion and the strategic use of the coercive apparatus and ruling elite concessions.

## *Disunified Dissent*

While the opposition forces in Algeria are noted as being dynamic and strong-willed, they did not collectively mobilize against the regime these last months. This may have something to do with the various cleavages and the differences in what they wanted to achieve, but it is still something of a paradox. (Entelis 2011)

First, there is the division between the opposition that participates in formal political institutions – political parties like the Rally for Culture and Democracy and the Worker’s Party – versus those that operate outside of formal politics. Although Algeria has a multi-party system in which many participate, the president’s National Liberation Front (FLN) still dominates. The rest of the parties either belong to the “Presidential Alliance,” for instance the prime minister’s National Rally for Democracy Party, and thus adhere to all the president’s policies, or they are token opposition. Some of the weaker ones, like the Workers’ Party and the Party for Justice and Liberty are allowed to field presidential candidates; however, they are denied equal opportunities to campaign and the president leverages government resources and monopoly on media outlets to ensure he is seen as the only legitimate candidate. As a result, while members of the political parties may have been in favor of political change, their ability to institute their demands through formal procedures was quite limited. Even the informal strategies did not work out well; on March 5<sup>th</sup> – months after the protests began – Algeria’s main opposition party held its first opposition rally in seven years. Police, however, were standing by to prevent it growing too large. (Werenfels 2004, 2007; *Middle East Turmoil* 2011)

Then, there is the opposition that operates outside of political institutions. They include leaders in civil society, the business community, religious groups, Berber activists, unions, etc. One of the biggest divisors between them, however, is their view on religion. In fact, some

groups who would support democracy nonetheless prefer to accept restricted political rights in order to prevent an Islamist takeover or chaos. This view, of course, is informed by the last experiment with democracy which led Algeria into a decade-long civil war. In spite of that fear, whose affect is also immeasurable, there are groups that desire change, but the consensus on a national agenda for that change is lacking. Instead, the protests in Algeria are more often compartmentalized into smaller issues unique to the group that organized them, for instance, demonstrators in Kabylie call for Berber rights, workers' protests want for better pay, and university students push for educational reform. (Werenfels 2007; Cavatorta and Elananza 2008)

### *Attempts to Create a Common Cause*

These recent protests were more universal because of the general economic difficulties felt across the country. By January 5<sup>th</sup>, the price index reached a record high and, with it, greater numbers of people took to the streets (Blas and Khalaf 2011). The regime quickly responded to the legitimate economic demands, however, by announcing on January 9<sup>th</sup> that taxes on key commodities would be cut by 41%. At this point in time, the demands remained economic, with hundreds of protesters calling for the government to "Bring us sugar!" (Bays 2011)

As Algerians saw the success of their Tunisian neighbors, an attempt to shift demonstrations to political demands was made, led by a new coalition called the National Coordination for Change and Democracy (CNCD). Still, pattern of disunity continued. Even well after Ben Ali fell, oil workers staged sit-ins for better wages, students rallied for more job opportunities, and other groups focused on joblessness and housing conditions. The opposition, then, remained weak and divided (Arief 2011). Eventually, divergent opinions within the opposition about the efficacy of protests, as well as the government responses (banning protests,

police clashes, promise of reform), caused the movement to lose steam. The numbers, never more than a few thousand, slowly decreased over time and attempts to conduct weekly protests in city centers garnered little popular support. Out of everyone, the students had more success in mobilizing folks, but even they were not able to sustain a movement (Schaar 2011)

### *Regime Unity*

On the other side of protesters were the ruling elites. The two important sources of elite leadership in Algeria are easily identifiable: President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and the *pouvoir militaire*, or military establishment (Celenk 2009). According to the constitution, the president should have ultimate authority. In practice, however, strength and independence of the *pouvoir militaire*, including their historic penchant to replace presidents they do not like, makes the power balance point in the other direction (Cook 2007). Evidence of their strength can be seen as recently as January 2010 when they managed to remove ministers and SONATRACH officials close to Bouteflika on corruption charges (Saleh 2010). Thus, whenever Bouteflika oversteps his bounds – which he has made efforts to do since coming to power in 1999 – the generals find ways to put him back in his place. Moreover, in recent years, Bouteflika's health has been deteriorating and so his effective independence has been even more questionable (Ford 2007). All this is to say that the decision making powers are very much centralized and, while there may be dissention within the ranks of the elites, the ultimate control lies with the *pouvoir militaire* and, when it came to managing this crisis of popular unrest, the elite response was prompt, unified, and ultimately effective.

### *Leveraging the Coercive Capabilities*

As the demonstrations broke out, the strategy of the *pouvoir militaire* was to leverage both its coercive capabilities – through the army, police, and *mukhabarat* – and its economic wealth, as it has done in the past. With the overwhelming force on the side of the ruling elites, protesters knew that all that stood between them and the butt of a gun was the internal cost-benefit analysis of the ruling elites that determine whether it's worth it (*Algeria: Country Profile* 2011). With the character of the internal divisions among President Bouteflika and his military leaders uncertain, there was concern that a crackdown was imminent. However, the regime wisely chose to take a proactive approach to repressing dissent. Instead of clashing with protesters already amassed in the main squares, the riot police blocked access to the gathering places in order to enforce a newly implemented ban on protests. In addition, at any demonstrations that did develop, security personnel were deployed in full force, outnumbering the protests by sometimes 10 to 1. (Arieff 2011)

That is not to say that things did not get violent. Clashes between government and opposition protesters left dozens dead. Early opposition violence included stoning a police station, setting fire to a car dealership, and raiding a warehouse to steal flour (Blas and Khalaf 2011). In March, the police used tear gas against about 150 protesters, some of whom threw Molotov cocktails and stones (*Reuters*). In addition, those who got beyond security road blocks were often beaten and dispersed and hundreds more were detained. Perhaps ironically, the biggest demonstration came from the 10,000 auxiliary police that broke through security to reach parliament in order to demand higher wages. It is significant, however, that they were not advocating against the government, but rather marched in their uniforms and declared “Bouteflika is the solution” (Algeria: thousands of police march for higher pay 2011).

### *Ruling Elite Concessions*

Simultaneously, the regime took advantage of their well-off financial situation to buy off some of the unrest. Further cuts to the price of some staple goods helped alleviate the immediate conditions on the ground. In addition, in a speech, Bouteflika made vague promises of future political and economic reforms to tackle unemployment and other economic disparities and exempted men 30 and older from mandatory military duty if they have not already served. Most notably, he lifted the 19-year-old state of emergency on February 24<sup>th</sup> which would supposedly reduce the role of the *pouvoir militaire* in daily life. On April 15<sup>th</sup>, Bouteflika gave a much-anticipated speech announcing plans to reform the constitution and electoral laws to bolster the multiparty system. The reaction of the public to the speech was mostly critical, with many doubting the sincerity of the reforms. However, others believe it's a step in the right direction and are more inclined to wait and see, or put pressure on the regime in other ways. While some like Said Saadi of the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD) still are pushing for popular mobilization, it seems that the rest of the country is not yet convinced to come along (Ouali 2011)

### *No More Surprises*

Outside of the various aspects described above, there do not seem to be any other major factors that can were definitive in shaping the unrest in Algeria. One could discuss the possible role of the media as only 4.7 million of the 35 million Algerians have access to internet, so the utility of Facebook, Twitter, and other social media appeared to be less than in wired Tunisia. However, throughout the months of unrest, the Algerian press was largely free to communicate

the events as they unfolded. In addition, the international community did not pay much attention to Algeria. There may have been more things happening behind the scene, but to the public, there was not any significant international pressure on either the regime or the protesters.

### Explaining the Outcome: Holding onto the Status Quo

Today, there are ongoing protests in Algeria, but they remain relatively disparate and are only possible because the *pouvoir* allow them. Moreover, the numbers have dwindled from even their highs, which still never made it past a few thousand in the best cases. At this point in time, then, it is safe to conclude that there was no revolution in Algeria. Just as the combination of factors working in Tunisia favored an outcome of political change, the prerequisite conditions, elite actions, and role of institutions did not facilitate significant change in the Algerian state-society relationship.

#### *Prerequisites:*

The barriers to change in Algeria remained high. The wealth of natural resources filled the state coffers and keep international allies close. The historical legitimacy that Bouteflika gained as the man who pulled Algeria out of a civil war remains relevant as the fight against terrorism persists. In addition, the quasi-open environment allows for just enough freedom of expression for opposition to not resort totally to underground networks, and yet their influence is carefully managed so as not to present a threat to the state.

From the population's perspective, there are many reasons to want change. The economic situation for a great proportion of the populace is quite dire. Moreover, when the raging unemployment and poverty is juxtaposed with the corrupt practices of the wealthy elite, it seems a sufficient incentive for rebellion. Holding Algerians back, however, is the memory of



the civil war. What Tunisia succeeded in doing, Algeria already tried 20 years ago, and over 150,000 people are dead because of it.

*Elites:*

Algeria is a society of vibrant civil culture. There are NGOs and political parties and professional associations. And, they can speak much of what is on their mind in the free press. That said, they are not a cohesive group. As they protest, they more commonly shout slogans specific to their organizations' needs than the society at large. While the great majority of them would prefer political and economic change, they do not all agree that a mass public uprising is the best way to achieve it. Because of this, there was no cohesion to the unrest in Algeria these last few months. While efforts were made to coordinate and there appeared to be the will for change, people made the decision not to rise to the occasion.

The duo of decision-makers residing at the top are the president and the *pouvoir militaire*, and while the level of internal agreement between them on the issue of the uprisings are not known, the military establishment seemed to have gotten its way. In contrast to the disunity of the opposition's demands, the regime's actions demonstrated foresight and savvy. Even defections in the lowest echelons of the regime structure – the auxiliary police – did not protest against the regime, but rather to compel the regime to give them more support.

*Institutions:*

For the opposition, there again seems to be a paradox in that they had the resources available to them in the form of formal political organizations and a plethora of civil society actors. But despite their structure and access to the media, the opposition elites and the society in general seems to have resisted partaking in mass collective action.

Part of the explanation for this also lies with the economic and coercive leverage executed by the elites. Because of their control over the Algerian version of the military-industrial complex, they were able to both present a full show of force – complete with guards blocking protest zones and detention for dissenters – and also economic incentives – like commodity price relief and promises of future develop. Whether or not the threat of force or the promises of reform were sincere, they certainly both played a positive role in keeping potential protesters at home.

## CHAPTER 6

### COMPARISON

Any suggestion that all authoritarian regimes, or even that all Arab or North African authoritarian regimes, are the same misses a great deal of nuance. Although they share certain broad identifying characteristics, the fact is that the systems are unique in everything from history and structure, power distribution and socioeconomic conditions, and coercive capabilities and relative freedoms. Ironically, it takes a common crisis to reveal how vastly different the internal dynamics really are.

Now, the discussion can come full circle. It started on the outset with a literature review explaining the common themes of MENA authoritarianism. Then, given the context of the “Arab Spring,” the driving factors in both the Tunisian and Algerian models have been pulled apart and analyzed. Finally, now, they can be compared on the basis of the analytical framework (Figure 1) to determine what caused political change to be more viable in one than the other.

#### Prerequisite Conditions

##### *Barriers to Change*

The prerequisite arguments highlighted all of the factors that shaped the current environment – both those that serve as barriers to change and those that make change necessary and desired. In Tunisia and Algeria the regimes were able to stay in power so long simply because of the presence of those barriers. The strong states emerged in the late 1950s/early

1960s because a centralized power was vital to turn the former colonial into self-sustaining states. The justification for the regimes later shifted to emphasize the state as protectors against Islamist threats. Finally, by the time the legitimacy of the regime could be called into question by the people, they had both established for themselves a circle of international support based on trade and anti-terrorism and their hold over economic resources allowed them to run inefficient, but profitable state economies and patrimonial systems. All these things were shared.

However, in sum, Algeria's prerequisite conditions were stronger. Tunisia's diverse economy required the participation of a larger sector of the population. That made the overall population wealthier and gave rise to a strong middle class. In Algeria, on the other hand, the oil and natural gas industries were mastered by SONATRACH, which essentially served as an extension of the government itself. The result was a poorer population, but a stronger regime.

In addition, Algeria's decade-long, violent civil war left a powerful disincentive against popular shake ups. It also gave Algeria more credibility in the international community as a partner in counterterrorism initiatives. Between the counterterrorism assistance and the oil dependency, the developed Western world seemed to have much more interest and support for Algeria than for Tunisia, despite all the exports and investment opportunities it had to offer.

### *Drivers of Change*

As far as absolute economic indicators go, the Algerian people are far worse off. However, the research on revolutions demonstrates the importance of relativity. While the wealthy Algerian government can easily quell economic grievances with targeted aid, the Tunisian wealth was stored away in the private coffers of Ben Ali and his extended Trabelsi

family and elite network. Thus, while corruption existed in both places, it was more personally affronting in the Tunisian case.

In addition to that, the Tunisian society was far more repressed. Token opposition and non-threatening civil society groups were permitted in both Tunisia and Algeria, but the media in Tunisia was completely closed compared to Algeria's impressive freedom of expression. Also, while demonstrations were common throughout Algeria, they were practically unheard of in Tunisia (with the recent exception of the Gafsa miners). The result of this constant monitoring in Tunisia was that dissent was pushed into underground channels – often in online forums – which necessarily made them more subversive than their Algerian counterparts.

The large and omnipresent coercive apparatus in each country was fierce and feared. But here, too, there was an important difference. Tunisians viewed theirs as nothing but a mechanism for social control, but some Algerians also had reason to perceive theirs as protection from the chaos and uncertainty of the civil war years.

It is true that both Tunisians and Algerians had plenty of reasons to be discontented with political and economic systems rife with inequities. It also must be acknowledged that the thresholds for unacceptable levels of repression and inequality is impossible to measure or comparably compare between countries. That said, the conditions indicate a strong probability that Tunisians had more physical and psychological fodder with which to incite a revolution.

## Elites

### *Opposition Elites*

Over the years, Tunisia and Algeria both developed vibrant civil societies, with professional associations, unions, cultural groups, political parties, and even some human rights

NGOs. The opposition organizations had more freedom and credibility in Algeria, however, compared to the widespread government subversion schemes that co-opted much of society in Tunisia. Also, the contestational movements in Algeria generally compartmentalized their demands: Berbers for cultural rights, workers for higher wages, students for educational reform, etc. By contrast, the underground channels of dissent in Tunisia probably found it easier to claim a single target demand: ending government repression and censorship.

When it comes to the role opposition elites played in Tunisia's Jasmine Revolution and Algeria's unnamed experience with the Arab Spring, the result is not necessarily intuitive. Because Algerian opposition was much more open to begin with, it would make sense that they would have a greater ability to mobilize. In reality, however, the Tunisians – guided in large part by the organization of the UGTT and the country's lawyers – swiftly mobilized tens of thousands to come to the street in support of a unified set of political and economic demands. Algerian opposition, conversely, failed in an attempt to build a coalition under the CNCD. Instead, the much more limited number of people who protested in Algeria stuck primarily to an economic, rather than political, agenda and also remained focused on local and organization-specific demands. There are two possible explanations for this difference in behavior. One is that the Algerians simply do not want sweeping political change as much as Tunisians do, or want it but believe it can be accomplished with different methods. The second is that because Algerian organizations were more established as public dissenters, they were more reluctant to relinquish their independence to join as a singular entity. Regardless, the final conclusion still suggests that the unity of the Tunisian opposition was more effective in mobilizing the masses while the ad hoc approach of Algerian opposition limited their strength.

### *Regime Elites*

The structure of elites at the top is really one of the most significant differences between the countries. In Tunisia, the Trabelsi family and a ring of close ministers, military personnel and administrative advisors made up the core surrounding the king at the top: Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali. The unquestionable authority was the president. On the other hand, Algeria had a unique dichotomy of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and the *pouvoir militaire* who jointly exercised leadership over the state. True, the policies mostly came from the president, however, the real force behind them was the military. In some sense, this led to more divisive leadership, especially when Bouteflika tried to exercise his own authority. Despite that, the generals had a knack for putting the president back in his place, as they demonstrated with the scandal over SONATRACH. Moreover, Bouteflika's recent poor health indicates perhaps even greater waning power on his part.

When faced with the threat of widespread popular uprisings, the reactions of these leading elites varied greatly. Ben Ali's leadership failed to live up to the challenge and he came across as unprepared: the deployment of security forces was insufficient to quell the masses, attempts to repress online activists showed a severe misunderstanding and underestimation of social media networks, and his concessions were too little too late. When his efforts did not weaken opposition demands, his military general defected and took the coercive force out of Ben Ali's hands, giving him no choice but to leave.

In comparison, the Algerian reaction was proactive and effective. They immediately deployed all of their forces to prevent protesters from gathering. Simultaneously, they

announced immediate economic reprieve and made promises that economic development would be seriously addressed in the near future. This combination, along with the fact that the opposition never unified, proved to be enough to manage the conflict currently. That's not to say that tomorrow a new opposition coalition won't be announced or the failure to bring about promised reforms won't lead to more strife tomorrow, but the up-front strategy was certainly enough to contain the immediate situation.

### Institutions

The final element that bridges all the pieces together is the institutional role. The Tunisian regime had strong institutions available to them, namely the coercive apparatus and the control over formal political and media structures. Had Ben Ali leveraged them differently, by promising to enhance the multiparty system, or deploying more troops initially, for instance, things might very well have turned out in his favor. As it stands, however, when General Ammar and, to some extent, Nessma TV, turned against him, it was as if the rug was pulled out from beneath his feet: without the institutions, he had no power.

The Algerian institutional structure, on the other hand, was probably even more formidable. Because the hydrocarbon industry was officially connected to the state, Bouteflika had ample money to throw at the problem areas. Moreover, the *pouvoir militaire*'s experience with the coercive apparatus showed in how they proactively, and cautiously, utilized all their force. In addition, the greater freedom of civil society organizations and the media likely provided alternative avenues to address grievances and thus took some of the heat out of the public demonstrations. Ironically, the slightly more open and pluralistic system may have been helpful in maintaining the Algerian regime, whereas the unconditional repression in Tunisia necessitated the informal collective action.



## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

Explanation of political change, or lack thereof, is not an exact science. There are many frames with which the dynamics can be analyzed and understood. Hopefully this frame proved useful in revealing some of the patterns and differences between the two countries. This analysis is not an end in itself, but rather a preparation for more in depth research on these case studies and others. It may be useful to tackle the same questions from the perspective of different levels of analysis and more specific emphases on gender, political economy, identity, and other factors not addressed in this study that still might illuminate more important aspects. In the end, the simple truth is that more scholarship is needed. The greater the variety of ideas and theories that are added to the discourse, the deeper the ultimate knowledge gained. The significance of this discussion does not end on paper, but informs subsequent policies of both state and non-state actors. Thus, this work is imperative both from an intellectual and a practical standpoint.

In closure, one final observation must be stated: change is a dynamic concept and it does not have a start or end date. Every day, political systems are adapting to changes in their environment, new leaders bring new ideas, and coalitions are broken and reformed. All this is to say that the evolution of state and society in Tunisia and Algeria is an ongoing process and, happily for the scholars who study it, the work of analyzing and seeking to understand it is never complete. Hopefully future studies will continue to build on, contest, and refine the ideas presented in this paper and more nuanced and effective policies will result.

## WORKS CITED

- Abootalebi, Ali Reza. 2000. *Islam and democracy : state-society relations in developing countries, 1980-1994, Comparative studies in democratization*. New York: Garland Pub.
- Abouzeid, Rania. 2011. Bouazizi: The Man Who Set Himself and Tunisia on Fire. *TIME*.
- AFP. 2010. Thousands of Tunisia lawyers strike. *Al Jazeera English*.
- Algeria: Country Profile. CIA 2011. Available from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ag.html>.
- Algeria: thousands of police march for higher pay. 2011. *Financial Times*.
- Amnesty International. 2010. Tunisia Urged to End Subversion of Groups Critical of the Authorities.
- Angrist, Michele Penner. 1999. The Expression of Political Dissent in the Middle East: Turkish Democratization and Authoritarian Continuity in Tunisia. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 41 (4):730-757.
- Arendt, Hannah. 1989. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Arief, Alexis. 2011. Algeria: Current Issues. Washington: Congressional Research Service.
- Arief, Alexis. 2011. Political Transition in Tunisia. Washington: Congressional Research Service.
- Bays, James. 2011. 'Bring us sugar!'. In *Inside Story*. Washington: Al Jazeera English.
- Bellin, Eva. 2005. Coercive Institutions and coercive Leaders. In *Authoritarianism in the Middle East : regimes and resistance*, edited by M. P. a. M. P. A. Posusney. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
- Bellin, Eva 2004. The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective. *Comparative Politics* 36 (2):139-157.
- Ben Bouazza, Bouazza 2011. Tunisia's Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi Resigns. *Huffington Post*, 27 Feb 2011.
- Blas, Javier, and Roula Khalaf. 2011. Algerians riot over rising price of food. *Financial Times*.
- Boubekur, Amel 2009. Tunisia: Beyond Illusions of Change. *Open Democracy*, <http://carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=24066>.
- Bowring, Rebecca. 2011. Amid riots, Tunisia's Ben Ali faces test of legitimacy. *France 24*, January 13, 2011.
- Brand, Laurie A. 1998. *Women, the state, and political liberalization : Middle Eastern and North African experiences*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Brownlee, Jason. 2007. *Authoritarianism in an age of democratization*. Cambridge England ; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Brownlee, Jason. 2010. Authoritarianism after 1989. *Harvard International Review* 31 (4):44-49.
- Brownlee, Jason M. 2005. Political Crisis and Restabilization: Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Tunisia In *Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Regimes and Resistance*, edited by M. P. Posusney and M. P. Angrist. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Brownlee, Jason M. . 2002. Review: Low Tide after the Third Wave: Exploring Politics under Authoritarianism. *Comparative Politics* 34 (4):477-498.

- Brumberg, Daniel. 2002. The Trap of Liberalized Autocracy. *Journal of Democracy* 13 (4):56-68.
- Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. 2010. Background Note: Tunisia. Washington: US Department of State.
- Burton, Michael, and John Higley. 2001. The Study of Political Elite Transformations. *International Review of Sociology* 11 (2):181-199.
- Byrne, Eileen , and Roula Khalaf. 2011. Tunisia sacks interior minister as riots continue. *Washington Post*, January 13, 2011.
- Cavatorta, F., and A. Elananza. 2008. Political opposition in civil society: An analysis of the interactions of secular and religious associations in Algeria and Jordan. *Government and Opposition* 43 (4):561-578.
- Celenk, Ayse Aslihan. 2009. Promoting democracy in Algeria: the EU factor and the preferences of the political elite. *Democratization* 16 (1):176-192.
- Chick, Kristen. 2011. Tunisia protesters defy curfew in capital. *Christian Science Monitor*.
- Clinton, Hillary Rodham. 2011. Remarks at Forum for the Future: Partnership Dialogue Panel Session Doha.
- Coke, Margaret. 2011. Tunisia Leader Makes Concessions Amid Strife. *Wall Street Journal*.
- Cook, Steven. 2011. The Last Days of Ben Ali? *Council on Foreign Relations*.
- Cook, Steven A. 2007. *Ruling but not governing : the military and political development in Egypt, Algeria, and Turkey*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Country Report: Algeria. 2011. In *Economist Intelligence Unit*. London: Economist Intelligence Unit Limited.
- Country Report: Tunisia. December 2010. London: Economist Intelligence Unit.
- Country Report: Tunisia. January 2009. London: Economist Intelligence Unit.
- D'Anieri, Paul. 2006. Explaining the success and failure of post-communist revolutions. *Communist & Post-Communist Studies* 39 (3):331-350.
- Dillman, Bradford. 2002. International Markets and Partial Economic Reforms in North Africa: What Impact on Democratization? *Democratization* 9 (1):63.
- Dollard, John. 1980. *Frustration and aggression*. Westport, Conn. ;: Greenwood Press.
- Entelis, J. P. 2005. The democratic imperative vs. the authoritarian impulse: The Maghrib state between transition and terrorism. *Middle East Journal* 59 (4):537-558.
- Entelis, J. P. 2007. The unchanging politics of North Africa. *Middle East Policy* 14 (4):23-41.
- Entelis, John. 2011. Personal Interview, 26 April 2011.
- Entelis, John P. 1999. Sonatrach: The political economy of an Algerian state institution. *Middle East Journal* 53 (1):9.
- Erdle, Steffen. 2004. Tunisia: Economic Transformation and Political Restoration. In *Arab Elites: Negotiating the Politics of Change*, edited by V. Perthes. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Evans, Martin, and John Phillips. 2007. *Algeria : anger of the dispossessed*. New Haven Conn. ; London: Yale University Press.
- Fattah, Moataz A. 2006. *Democratic values in the Muslim world*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Fish, Steven. 2002. Islam and Authoritarianism. *World Politics* 55:4-37.
- Ford, Ambassador Robert. 2007. An Ailing and Fragile Algerian Regime Drifts into 2008. *Wikileaks* 07ALGIERS1806.
- Godec, Robert F. 2008. Corruption in Tunisia: What's Yours is Mine. *Wikileaks* 08TUNIS679.

- Gunshots fired as Tunis protests continue. 2011. *The Guardian*, January 13, 2011.
- Gurr, Ted Robert. 1970. *Why men rebel*. Princeton, N.J.: Published for the Center of International Studies, Princeton University by Princeton University Press.
- Hafez, Mohammed M. 2003. *Why Muslims rebel : repression and resistance in the Islamic world*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Haklai, O. 2009. Authoritarianism and Islamic Movements in the Middle East: Research and Theory-building in the Twenty-first Century. *International Studies Review* 11 (1):27-45.
- Hale, Henry E. 2006. Democracy or autocracy on the march? The colored revolutions as normal dynamics of patronal presidentialism. *Communist & Post-Communist Studies* 39 (3):305-329.
- Hawthorne, Amy 2004. *Is Civil Society the Answer?* In *Carnegie Working Paper 44*. Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Herb, Michael. 2005. No representation without taxation? Rents, development, and democracy. *Comparative Politics* 37 (3).
- Heron, Elizabeth , Erlangers, and Mona El-Naggar. 2011. Tunisia Leader Flees and Prime Minister Claims Power. *New York Times*, January 14, 2011.
- Higley, John, and Gwen Moore. 2001. Political Elite Studies at the Year 2000: Introduction. *International Review of Sociology* 11 (2):175-180.
- Hinnebusch, Raymond. 2006. Authoritarian Persistence, Democratization Theory and the Middle East: An Overview and Critique. *Democratization* 13 (3):373-395.
- Hudson, Michael C. 1992. The Middle East under Pax Americana: How new, how orderly? *Third World Quarterly* 13 (2):301-316.
- Huntington, Samuel P. 1971. The Change to Change: Modernization, Development, and Politics. *Comparative Politics* 3 (3):283-322.
- Huntington, Samuel P. 1984. Will More Countries Become Democratic? *Political Science Quarterly* 99 (2).
- Huntington, Samuel P. 1991. *The third wave : democratization in the late twentieth century, The Julian J Rothbaum distinguished lecture series*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Huntington, Samuel P. 2006. *Political order in changing societies*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Joffe-Walt, Benjamin. 2010. Freedom House Reports Regression in Freedoms across the Middle East. *Humanist* 70 (2):6-7.
- Khalidi, Rashid. 2004. *Resurrecting Empire: Western Footprints and America's Perilous Path in the Middle East* New York: Beacon Press.
- King, Stephen J. 2009. *The new authoritarianism in the Middle East and North Africa, Indiana series in Middle East studies*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Kirkpatrick, David D. 2011. Behind Tunisia Unrest, Rage Over Wealth of Ruling Family. *New York Times*, January 13, 2011.
- Kirkpatrick, David D. 2011. Chief of Tunisian Army Pledges His Support for 'the Revolution'. *New York Times*, 24 Jan 2011.
- Lenin, Nikolai. 1917. *The state and revolution; Marxist teaching on the state and the task of the proletariat in the revolution*: The United communist party of America.
- Lewis, Aidan. 2011. Tracking down the Ben Ali and Trabelsi fortune. *BBC News*.
- Lust-Okar, Ellen. 2005. *Structuring conflict in the Arab world : incumbents, opponents, and institutions*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Macintyre, Ben. 2011. An ordinary man on a bad day: he changed the world for ever. *The Times*.

- Middle East Turmoil*. Wall Street Journal 2011. Available from <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703842004576162884012981142.html>.
- Moore, Barrington. 1967. *Social origins of dictatorship and democracy: lord and peasant in the making of the modern world*. London,: Penguin P.
- Moore, Pete W., and Bassel F. Salloukh. 2007. Struggles under Authoritarianism: Regimes, States, and Professional Associations in the Arab World. *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39 (1):53-76.
- Norton, Augustus R. 2005. *Civil society in the Middle East*. Boston: Brill.
- O'Donnell, Guillermo , Philippe Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds. 1986. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule. Comparative Perspectives*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Olson, Mancur. 1982. *The rise and decline of nations : economic growth, stagflation, and social rigidities*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Ouali, Amer. 2011. Algerian reforms fail to meet expectations. *AFP*.
- Peeler, John A. 2001. Elites, Structures, and Political Action in Latin America. *International Review of Sociology* 11 (2):231-246.
- Perkins, Kenneth J. 2004. *A History of modern Tunisia*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Perthes, Volker. 2004. *Arab elites : negotiating the politics of change*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Posusney, Marsha Pripstein, and Michele Penner Angrist. 2005. *Authoritarianism in the Middle East : regimes and resistance*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
- Pulparampil, John K. 1976. *Political analysis : shifting trends and questionable assumptions*. Calcutta: Minerva Associates (Publications).
- Richards, Alan, and John Waterbury. 2008. *A political economy of the Middle East*. 3rd ed. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.
- Rifai, Ryan. 2011. Timeline: Tunisia's uprising. *Al Jazeera English*.
- Rimas, Evan Fraser and Andrew. 2011. The Psychology of Food Riots: When Do Price Spikes Lead to Unrest. *Forgein Affairs*, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67338/evan-fraser-and-andrew-rimas/the-psychology-of-food-riots>.
- Romdhani, Messaoud. 2011. Personal Interview.
- Ruedy, John. 2005. *Modern Algeria : the origins and development of a nation*. 2nd ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Rustow, Dankwart A. 1968. *A World of Nations: Problems of Political Modernization*. Washington: The Brookings Institution
- Ryan, Yasmine. 2011. Tunisia's bitter cyberwar. *Al Jazeera English*, 6 Jan 2010.
- Saleh, Heba. 2010. Algeria starts Sonatrach corruption probe. *Financial Times*, 17 January 2010.
- Saleh, Heba. 2010. Anger over unemployment erupts in Tunisia. *Financial Times*.
- Schaar, Stewart. 2011. Personal Interview.
- Sharabi, Hisham. 1988. *Neopatriarchy: A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Skocpol, Theda. 1979. *States and social revolutions : a comparative analysis of France, Russia, and China*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Steinmo, Sven, Kathleen Ann Thelen, and Frank Longstreth. 1992. *Structuring politics : historical institutionalism in comparative analysis, Cambridge studies in comparative politics*. Cambridge England ; New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Stepan, Alfred C., and Graeme B. Robertson. 2004. Arab, Not Muslim, Exceptionalism. *Journal of Democracy* 15 (4):140-146.
- Tempest, Clive. 1997. Myths from Eastern Europe and the Legend of the West. *Democratization* 4 (1):132-144.
- Tessler, M., and E. Gao. 2005. Gauging Arab support for democracy. *Journal of Democracy* 16 (3):83-97.
- Tessler, Mark. 2002. Islam and Democracy in the Middle East: The Impact of Religious Orientations on Attitudes towards Democracy in Four Arab Countries. *Comparative Politics* 34:337-354.
- Thompson, Mark R. 2004. *Democratic revolutions : Asia and Eastern Europe*. 1st ed, Routledge research in comparative politics. London ; New York: Routledge.
- Tilly, Charles. 1978. *From mobilization to revolution*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co.
- Tunisia: 11 die in new clashes after weeks of unrest. *The Guardian*, January 9, 2011.
- Tunisia: Country Profile. CIA 2011. Available from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ts.html>.
- Tunisia: Financial Sector Profile. 2010. *Making Finance Work for Africa*, <http://www.mfw4a.org/tunisia/tunisia-financial-sector-profile.html>.
- Tunisia: Overview. African Economic Outlook 2010. Available from [http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/countries/north-africa/tunisia/#/recent\\_economic\\_developments](http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/countries/north-africa/tunisia/#/recent_economic_developments).
- Versi, Anver 2009. Why Tunisia is Africa's Most Competitive Economy. In *Middle East*. London: World Bank.
- Wedeer, Lisa. 1999. *Ambiguities of domination : politics, rhetoric, and symbols in contemporary Syria*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Werenfels, Isabelle. 2004. Algeria: System Continuity Through Elite Change. In *Arab Elites: Negotiating the Politics of Change*, edited by V. Perthes. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Werenfels, Isabelle. 2007. *Managing instability in Algeria : elites and political change since 1995, History and society in the Islamic world*. London ; New York: Routledge.
- Wickham, Carrie Rosefsky. 2002. *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism and Political Change in Egypt*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Wickham, Carrie Rosefsky. 2004. The Path to Moderation. *Comparative Politics* 36 (2):205-228.